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Iwaoka Hisae

夢の底

Yume no Soko

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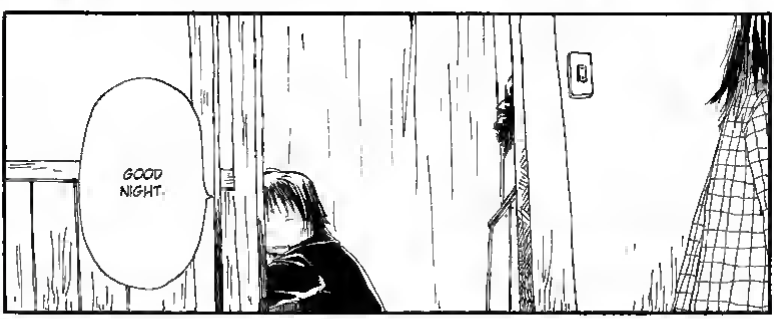
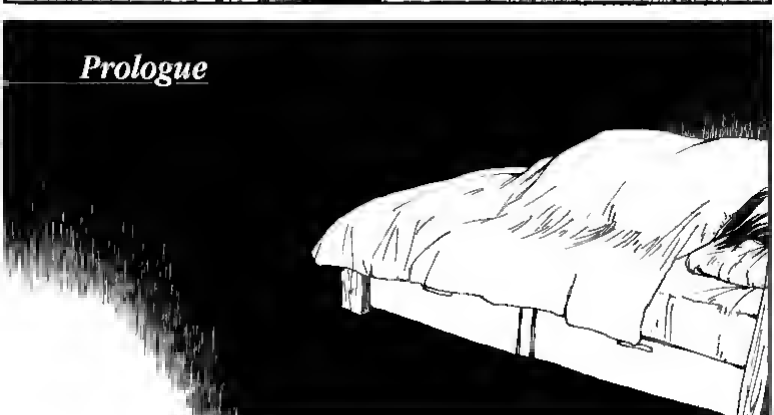
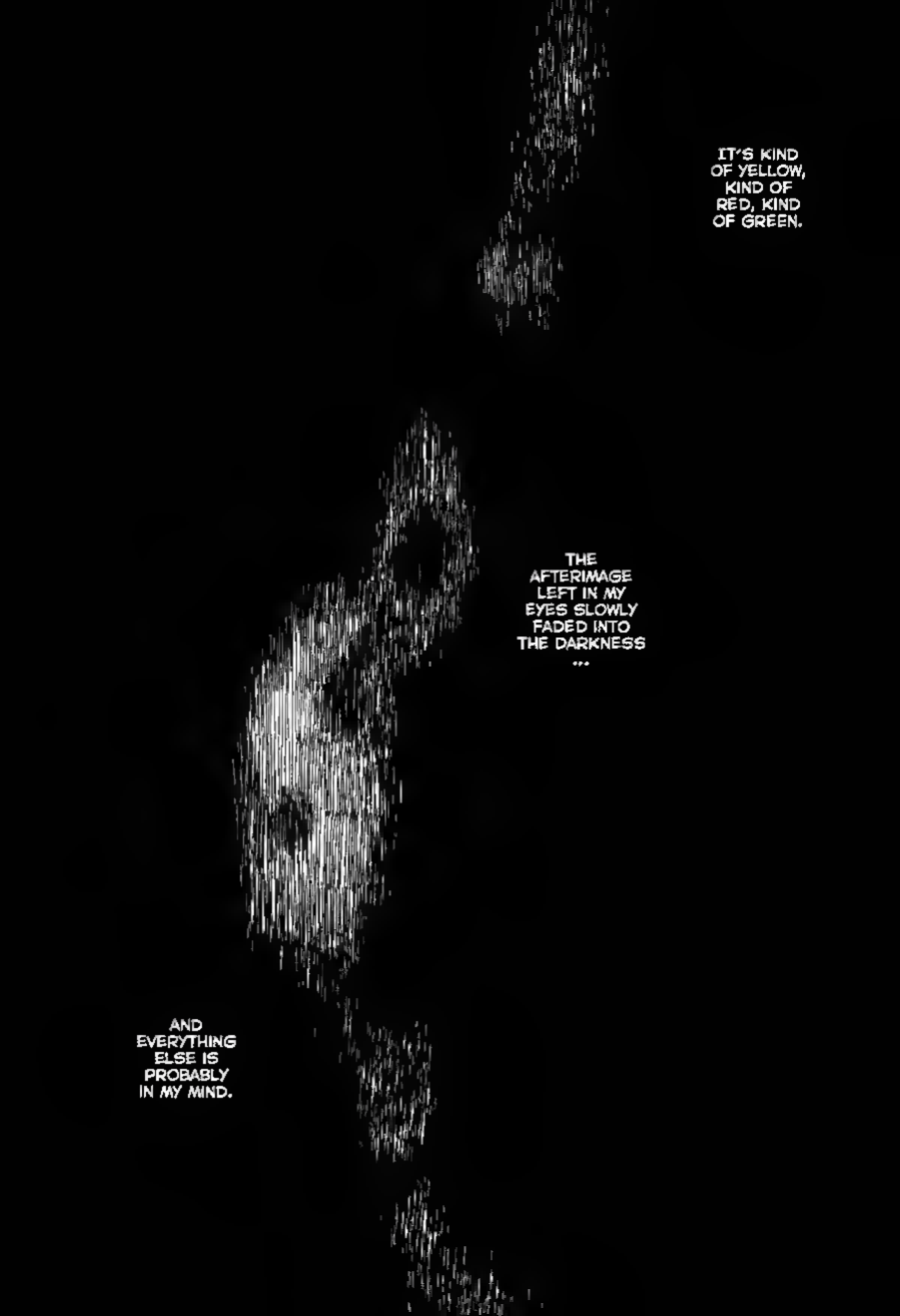
GOOD NIGHT.


GOOD NIGHT.

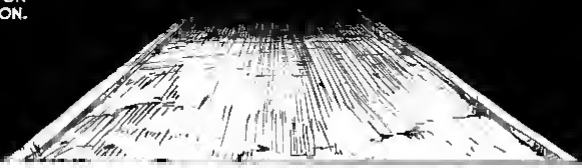

Prologue


IT'S KIND OF YELLOW, KIND OF RED, KIND OF GREEN.
THE AFTERIMAGE LEFT IN MY EYES SLOWLY FADED INTO THE DARKNESS ...
AND EVERYTHING ELSE IS PROBABLY IN MY MIND.

I DON'T FEEL TIRED.

MY BODY FEELS LIGHT.

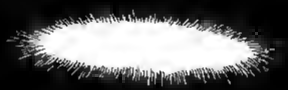
I CAN RUN ON AND ON.



WHERE CAN I GO?

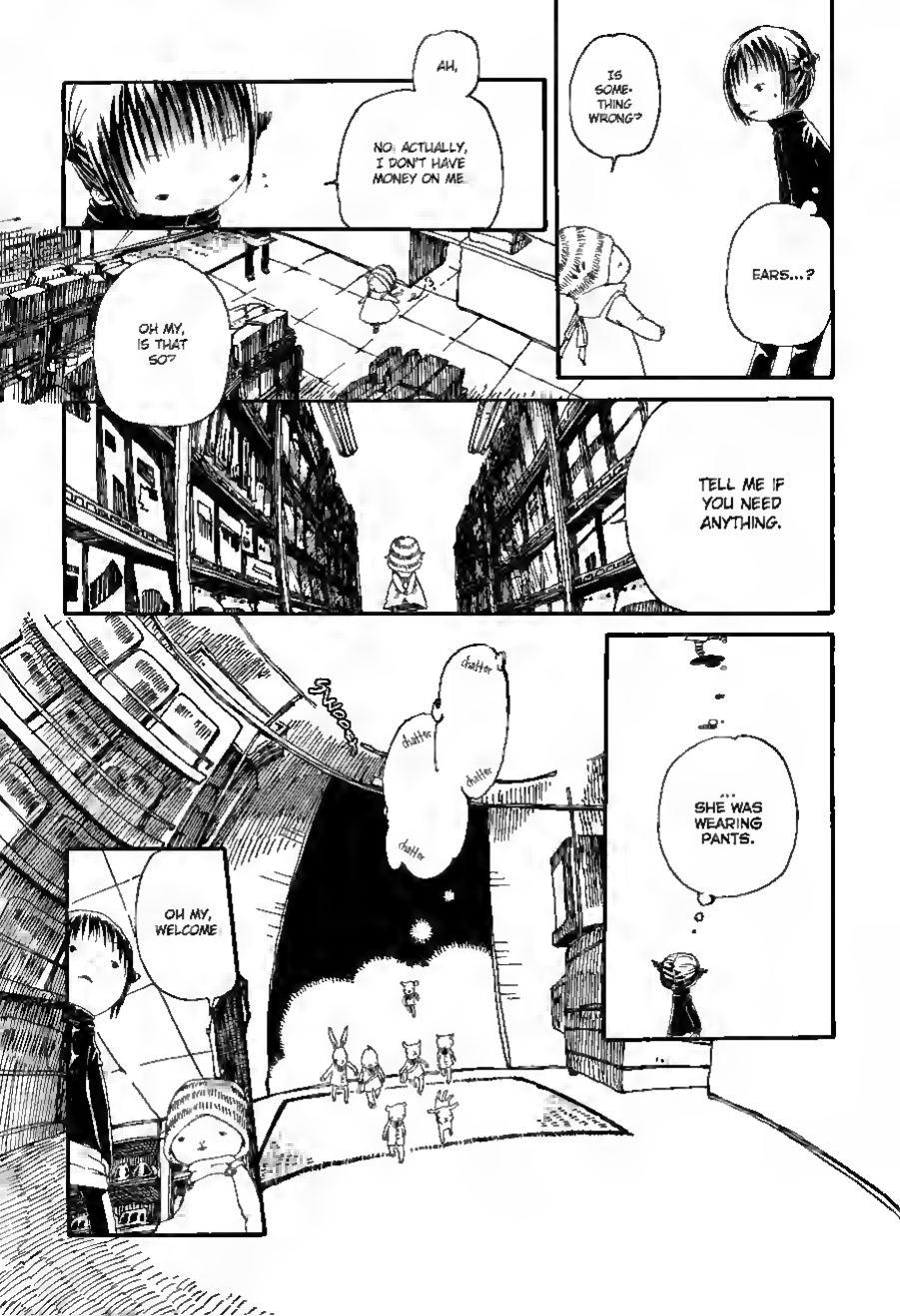
IF I KEEP ON GOING, I MIGHT REACH MY TRUE SELF.

A FAINT LIGHT.



Bottom of a Dream
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT RIGHT THEN I WAS IN FRONT OF A CONVENIENCE STORE.

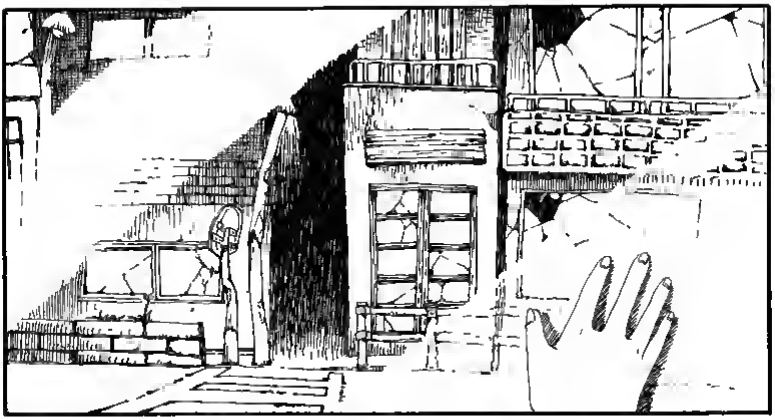
IS ANYBODY HERE—?
I DON'T HAVE MY WALLET.
IS ANYONE AROUND?
OH, WELCOME
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ANYTHING?

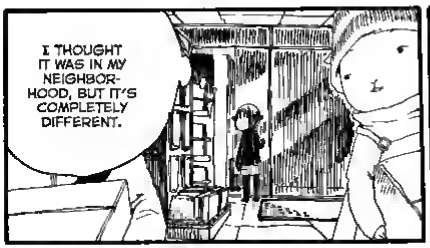

AH,
NO. ACTUALLY, I DON'T HAVE MONEY ON ME.
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
EARS...?
OH MY, IS THAT SO?
TELL ME IF YOU NEED ANYTHING.
...
SHE WAS WEARING PANTS.
OH MY, WELCOME
dattte
dattte
dattte
SWOOP

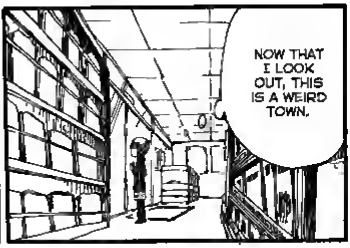
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
stare
THEY'RE ALL TINY ANIMALS,
AND THEY SEEM TO HAVE MONEY.
OH MY
I SEE, YOU'RE OFF TO WORK.
HAVE A NICE DAY.
THIS PLACE ..

'HUMANS' USUALLY CANNOT ENTER THIS WORLD.
BUT WHY ARE YOU HERE?
WELCOME
WHY
I KNOW, RIGHT?
THERE'S AN INTERESTING ONE HERE.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
IS THE LAND WHERE DREAMS ARE
A LONG TIME AGO, THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T COME BACK OUT OF THEIR OWN DREAMS.
SO GOD DECIDED TO HAND OUT THE DREAMS HE DECIDED UPON.
THESE LITTLE ONES ARE DREAM CARRIERS...
THAT DELIVER THOSE DREAMS TO 'HUMANS'.

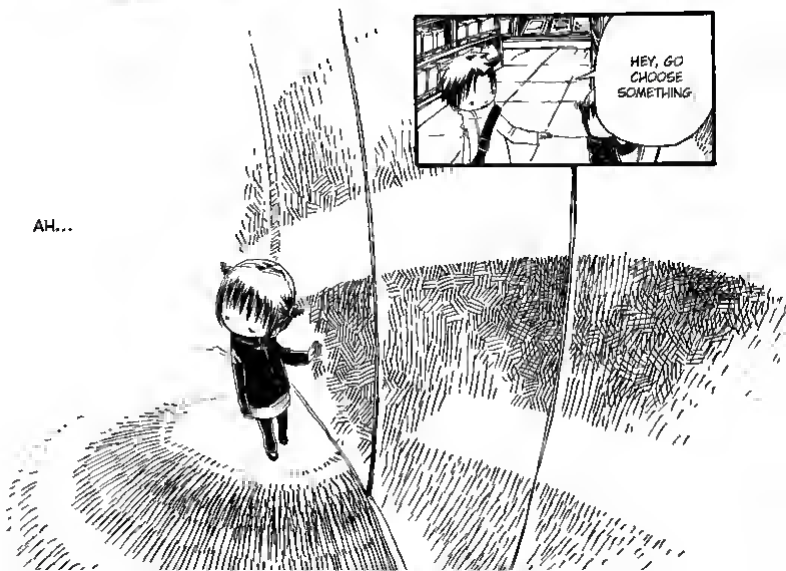
I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING
YOU BUYING ANYTHING?
AH NO. IT SEEMS I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY ON ME.
OH. THANK YOU.
HUH? IT FEELS LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE.
OH MY, IT'S STARTING TO GET WINDY.
clatter
clatter




I THOUGHT IT WAS IN MY NEIGHBOR-HOOD, BUT IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

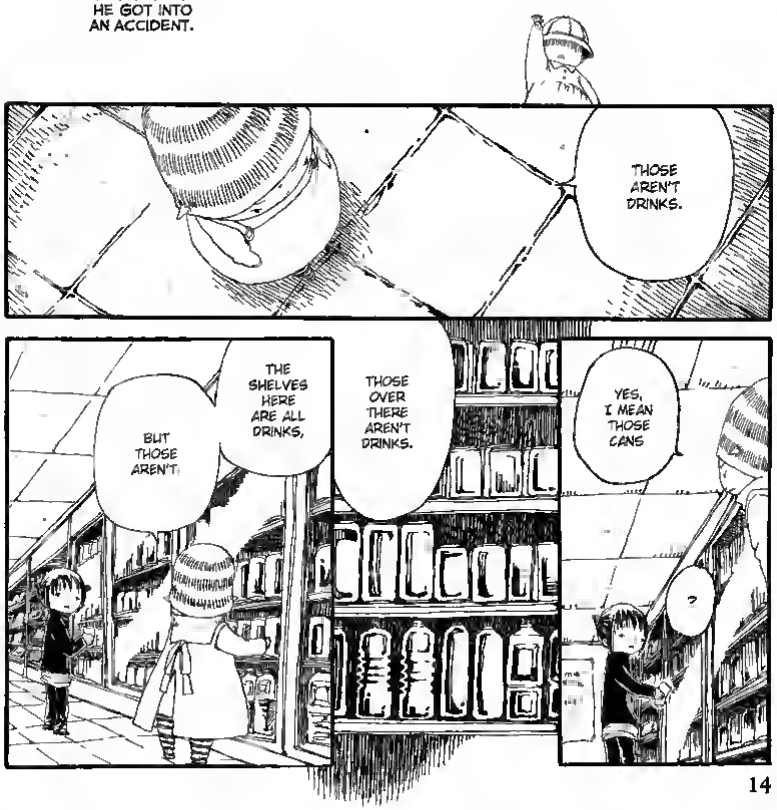

NOW THAT I LOOK OUT, THIS IS A WEIRD TOWN.

HEY, GO CHOOSE SOMETHING.

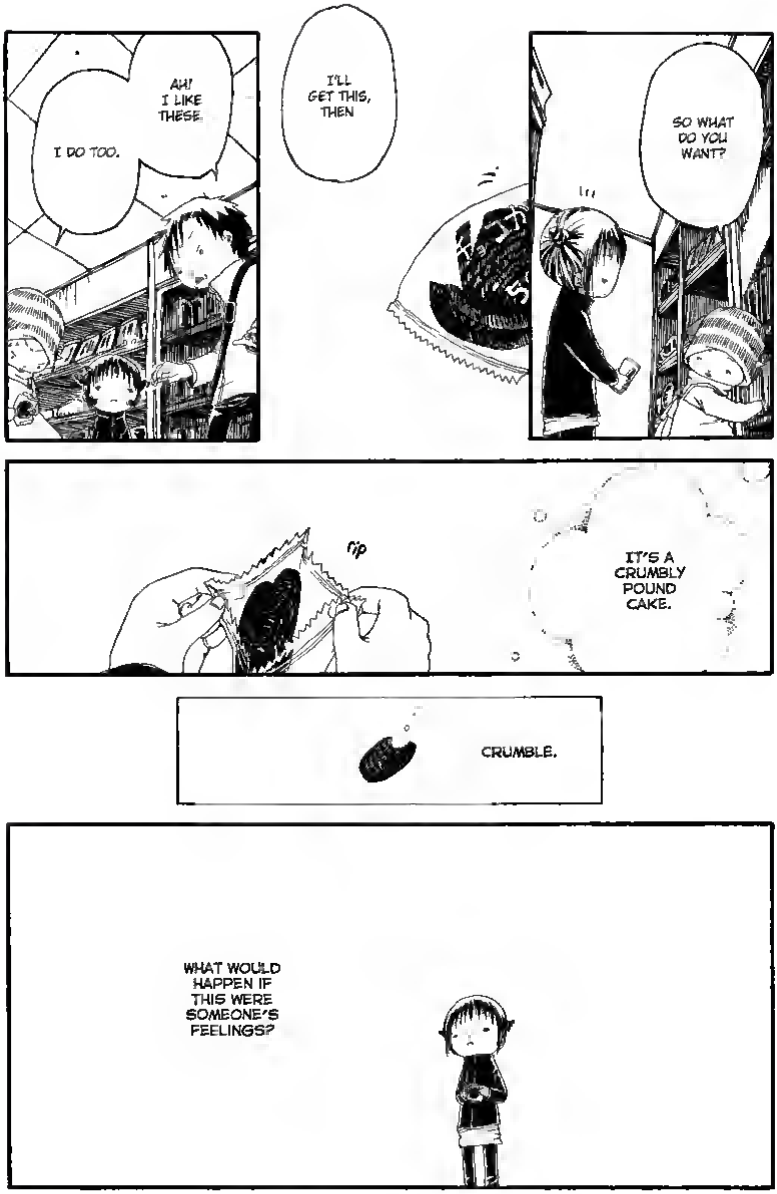

AH...

HE WAVED HIS HAND AND PROMISED TO SEE ME AGAIN,

BUT RIGHT AFTER THAT HE GOT INTO AN ACCIDENT.



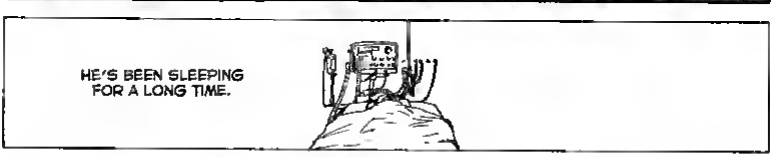
WHAT IS THIS, THEN?
DIFFERENT HEARTS, DIFFERENT FEELINGS
FEEL-INGS?
YOU KNOW, IMPORTANT THINGS THAT YOU CAN'T SAY OUT LOUD BECAUSE THEY'RE THAT IMPORTANT
I TAKE THOSE FEELINGS AND KEEP THEM HERE
WHEN YOU OPEN THE LID...
IT'S A REASSURING FEELING THAT SOMEONE KNOWS
SO PLEASE DON'T OPEN THESE CANS
THEY DISAPPEAR—


AH! I LIKE THESE.
I DO TOO.
I'LL GET THIS, THEN
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT?
rip
IT'S A CRUMBLY POUND CAKE.
CRUMBLE.
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THIS WERE SOMEONE'S FEELINGS?

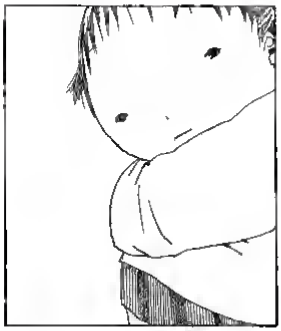
I WONDER IF MY FEELINGS WILL DISAPPEAR LIKE THIS POUND CAKE.
WHY IS HE HERE?
I'M LEAVING SOON
THANK YOU!
COME AGAIN
IN THIS PLACE?
WHY AM I...
IT WAS TIME FOR THE CARRIERS TO DELIVER DREAMS.

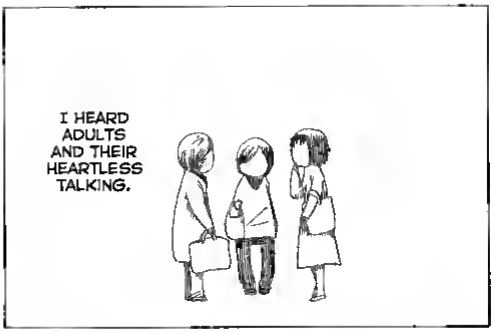
GOOD AND BAD DREAMS ARE PUT IN THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACES.
I WONDER
WHERE THEY DELIVER DREAMS.
THEY TRAVEL TO WHERE HUMANS ARE,
WHY YOU'RE HERE
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO ASK.
ME?
NO

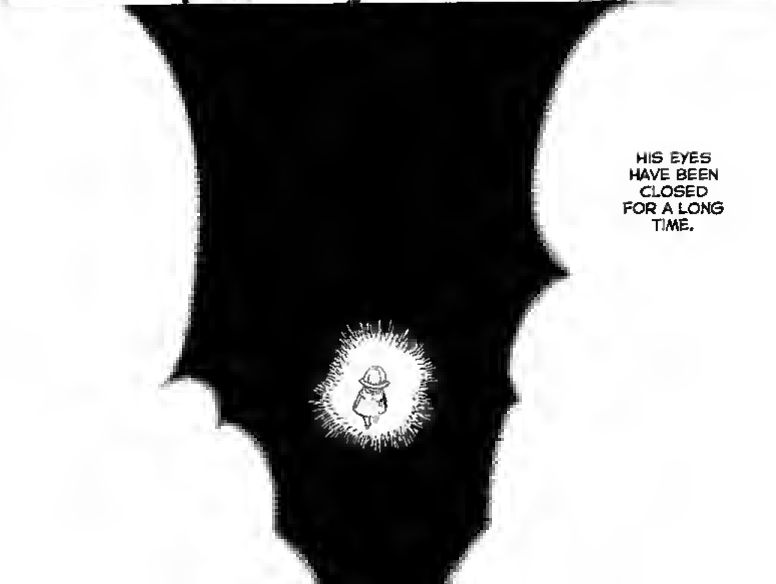
I'M SLEEPING
SLEEP-ING?
YEAH, SLEEPING.

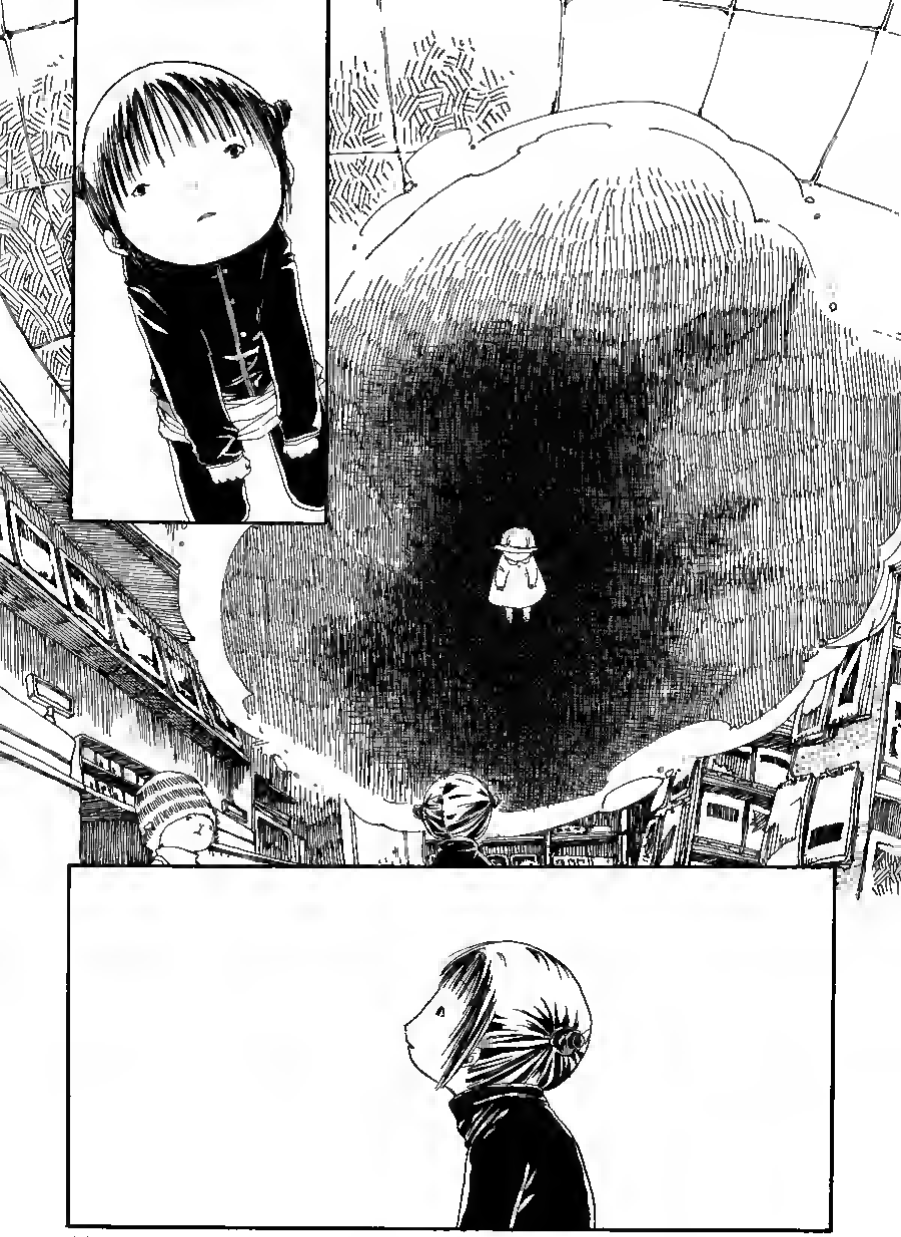

HE'S BEEN SLEEPING FOR A LONG TIME.

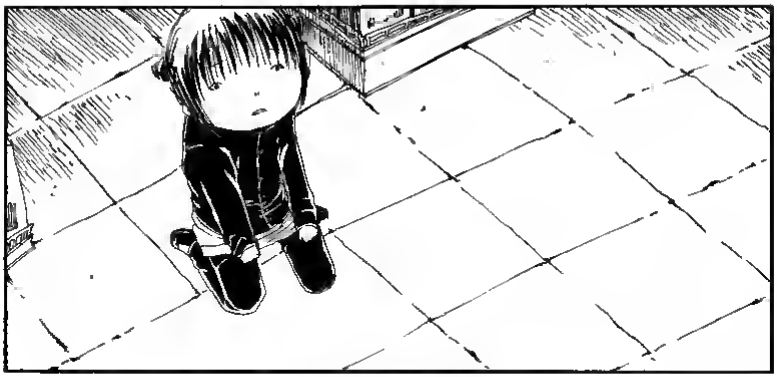
MY MOM TALKED ABOUT IT A WHILE AGO.

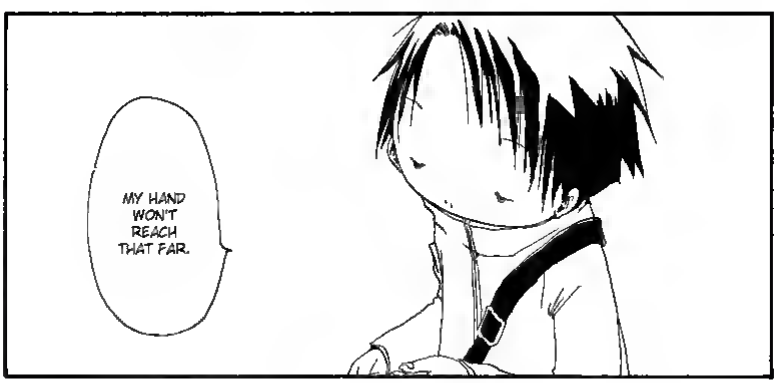


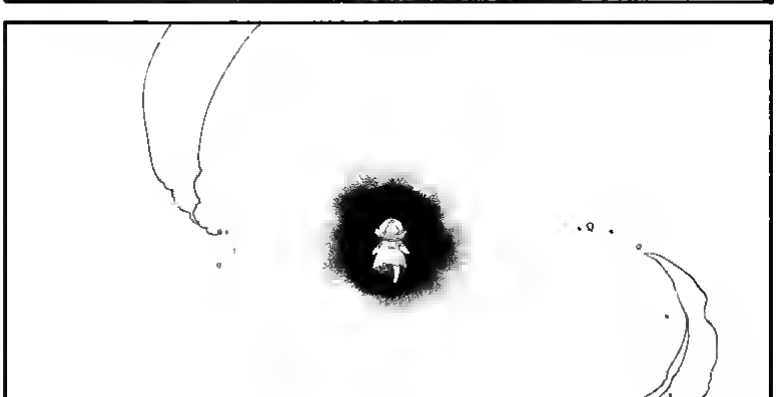

I HEARD ADULTS AND THEIR HEARTLESS TALKING.

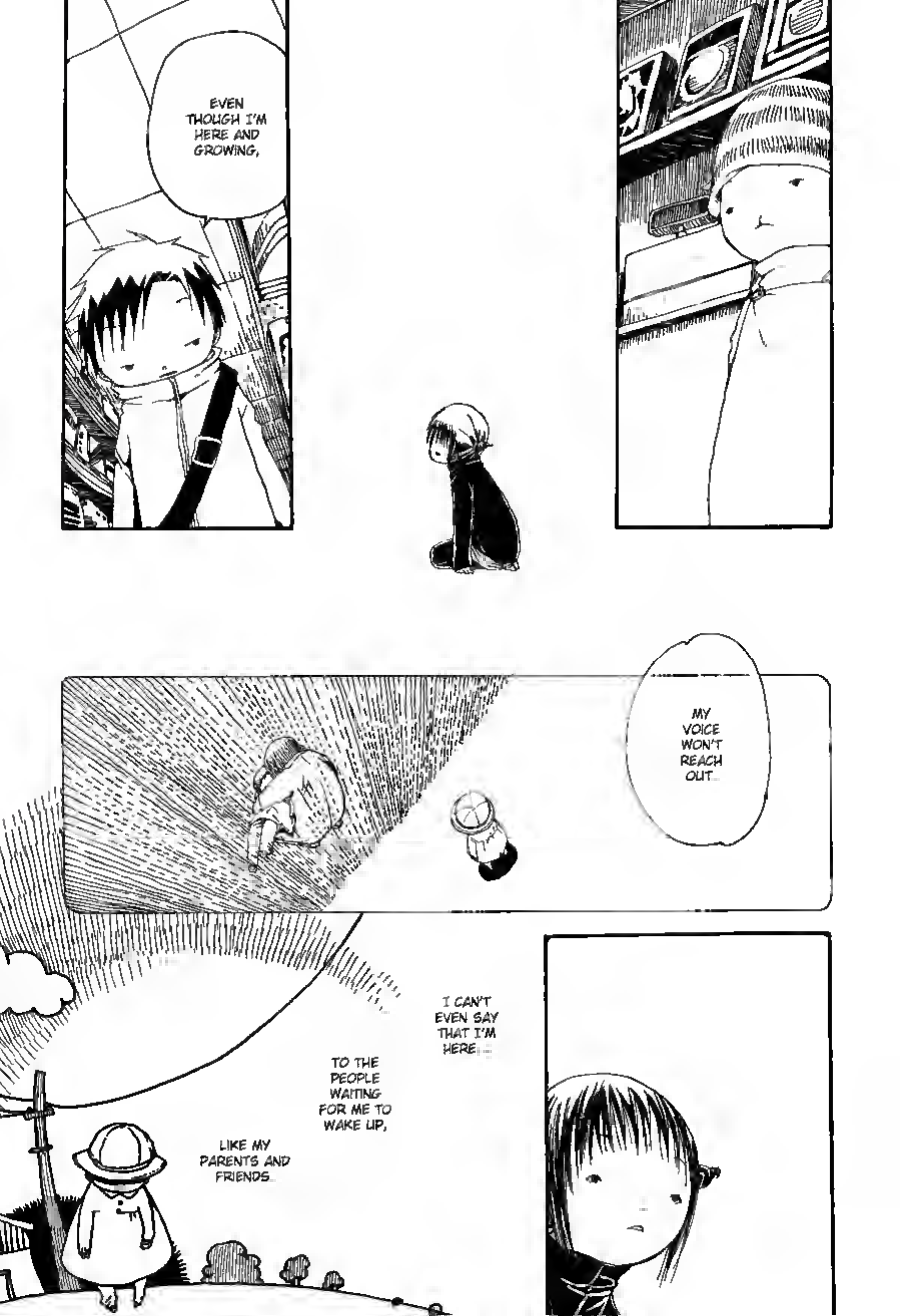

HIS EYES HAVE BEEN CLOSED FOR A LONG TIME.

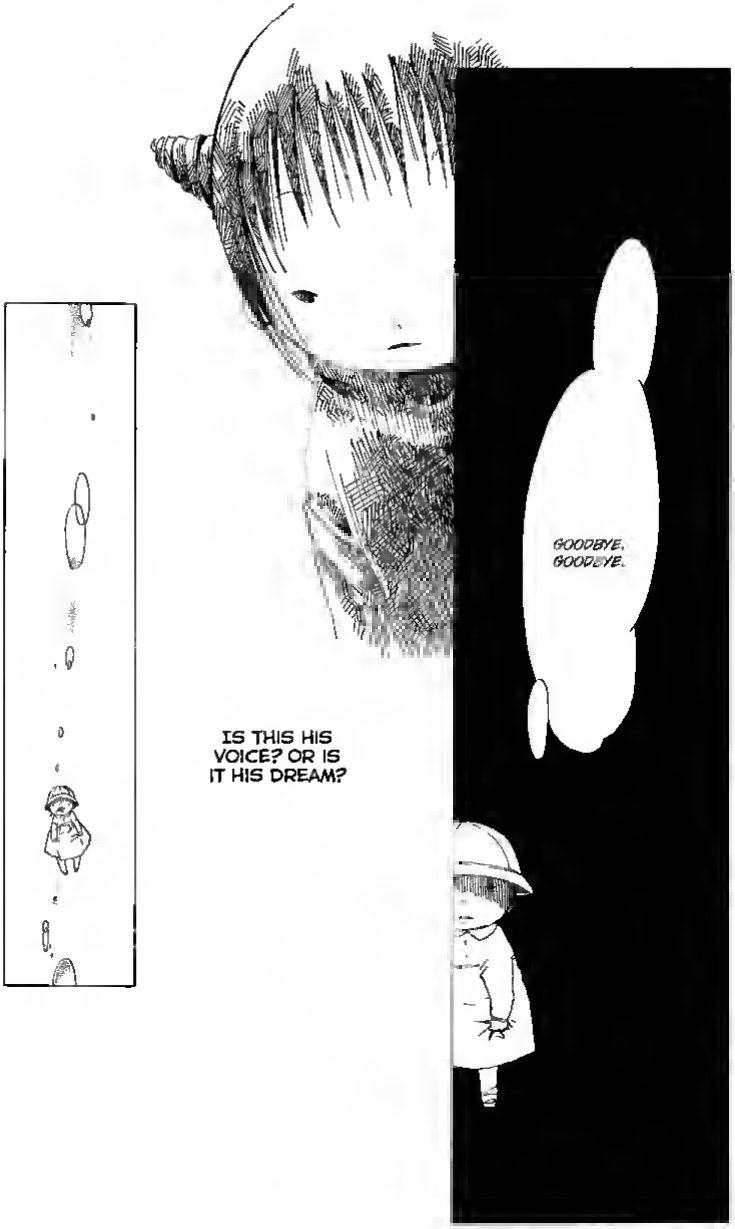


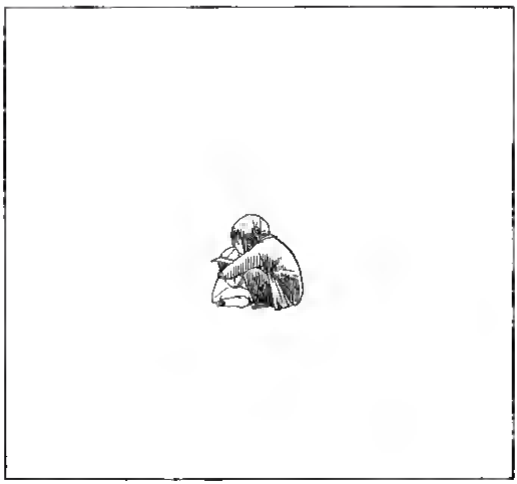



MY HAND WON'T REACH THAT FAR.

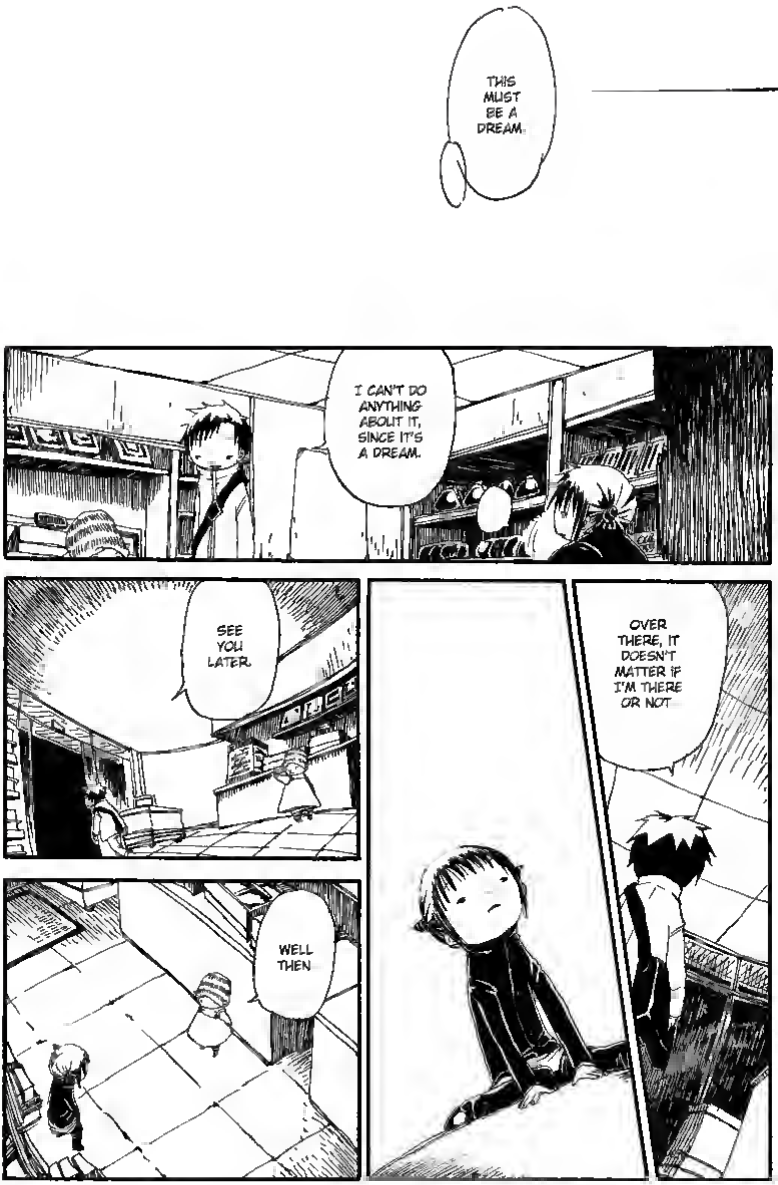



EVEN THOUGH I'M HERE AND GROWING,
MY VOICE WON'T REACH OUT...
I CAN'T EVEN SAY THAT I'M HERE...
TO THE PEOPLE WAITING FOR ME TO WAKE UP,
LIKE MY PARENTS AND FRIENDS...

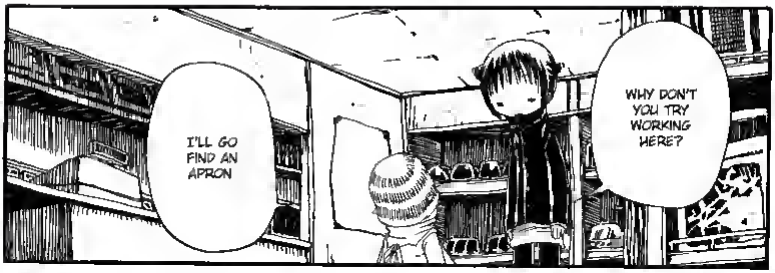

GOODBYE.
GOODBYE.
IS THIS HIS VOICE? OR IS IT HIS DREAM?

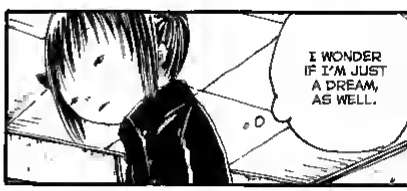


I HEARD HIS VOICE THAT
COULDN'T REACH OUT.


THIS MUST BE A DREAM.
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, SINCE IT'S A DREAM.
SEE YOU LATER.
OVER THERE, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I'M THERE OR NOT.
WELL THEN.

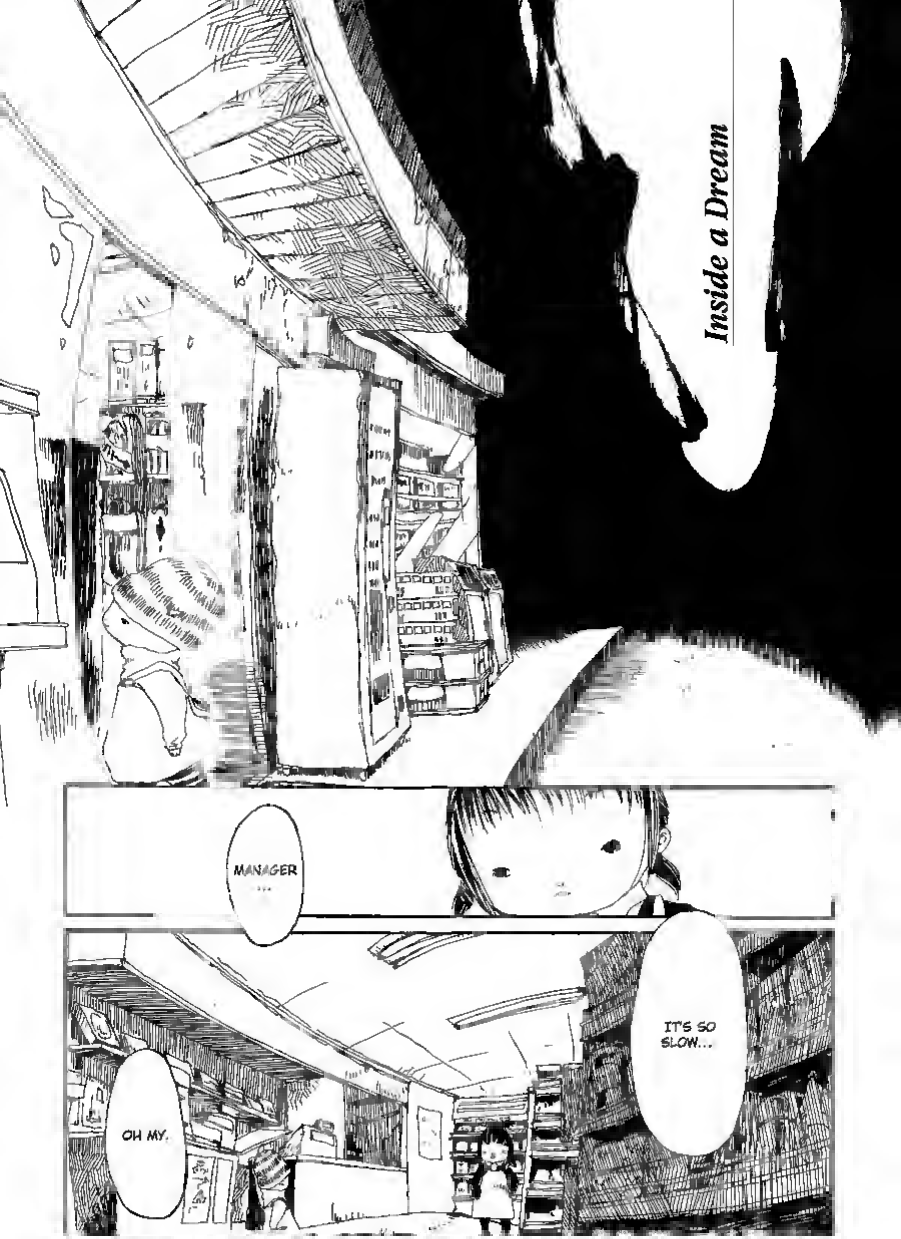
HE TALKS ROUGHLY, BUT HE'S A GOOD KID DON'T HATE HIM
HE WAS IN DENIAL OF HIS EXISTENCE
BUT THAT CAN'T BE TRUE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? ARE YOU LEAVING?
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET BACK.
UNTIL I WAKE UP.





FOR NOW...

I'LL JUST TAKE IN WHAT I SEE.


Inside a Dream
MANAGER...
IT'S SO SLOW...
OH MY.

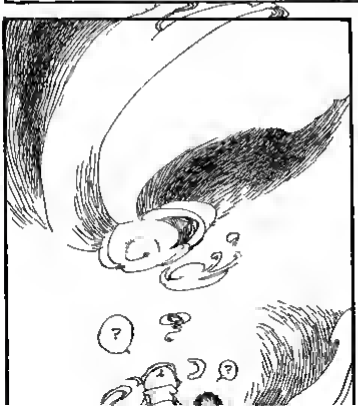
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING FRIGHTENING IN THERE...
RESTROOM
Please tell the manager if you'd like to use the restroom.
THIS PERSON (→) IS THE MANAGER OF THIS STORE. THIS STORE... IS A MYSTERIOUS STORE. IT'S INSIDE OF A PLACE WHERE "DREAMS ARE MADE".
LOOK AROUND AND YOU'LL FIND SOMETHING TO DO.
TIME FLOWS ON WITHOUT A CLOCK.
SORRY, COULD YOU TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE TOO?
SURE—
IF YOU START THINKING ABOUT IT...
YOU THINK YOU'LL GO CRAZY.

IF I THINK TOO MUCH IT BECOMES PAINFUL.
SO I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT MUCH.
DON'T WORRY, THEY'RE ALL SO SMALL THEY WON'T BUY TOO MUCH.
...YOU SHOULD NEVER WORK IN MANAGE-MENT...
OH MY GOD!! I FORGOT ABOUT THE CARRIER COMING TODAY!!
ARE THEY COMING TO PLACE ORDERS?

IT'S A CONVENIENCE STORE, BUT PLEASE COME INSIDE
WELL,
RIGHT ALONG THIS WAY—

Mm, is this the place where dreams are made?

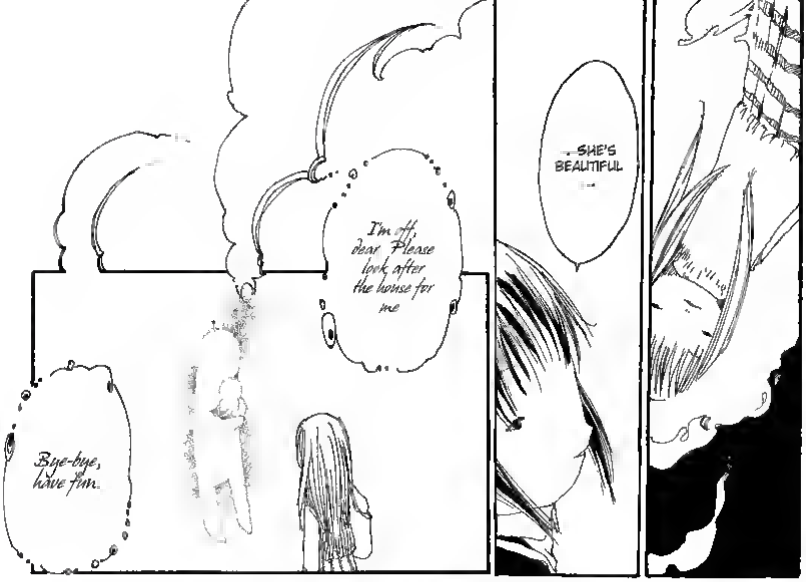
WELCOME
Hello
Hello

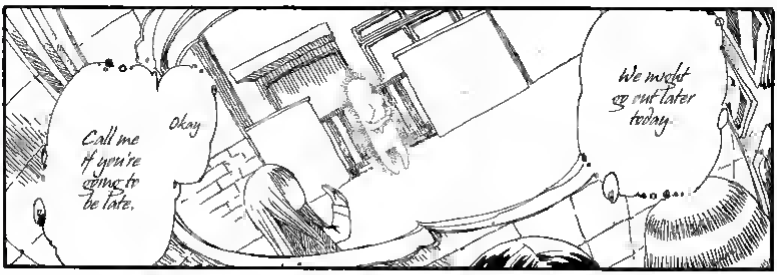

?
?

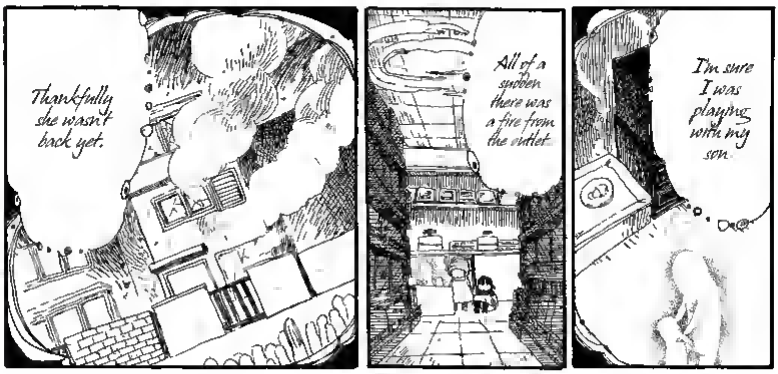
CORRECTION, THIS IS A CONVENIENCE STORE

I heard this is a land where dreams are made...

There's someone I want to see.
Though I don't remember who I am.
I'm sure that person is important to the both of us.


Bye-bye, have fun.
I'm off, dear. Please look after the house for me
...SHE'S BEAUTIFUL...


Call me if you're going to be late.
Okay
We might go out later today.


Thankfully she wasn't back yet.
All of a sudden there was a fire from the outlet.
I'm sure I was playing with my son.

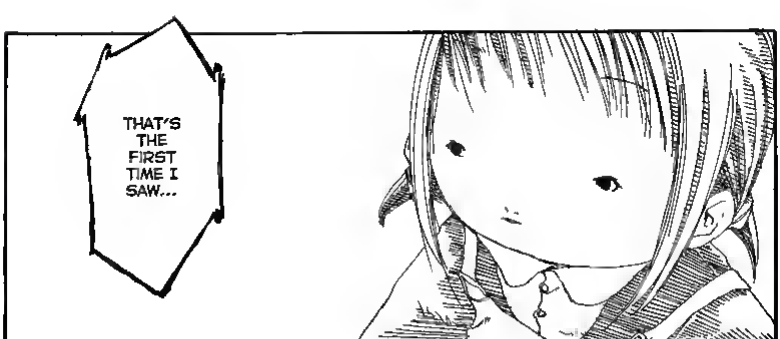
I can't go back
even though I didn't mean to leave without saying anything
I just wanted...
to tell her that I'm sorry for not being able to come back.
OH MY.

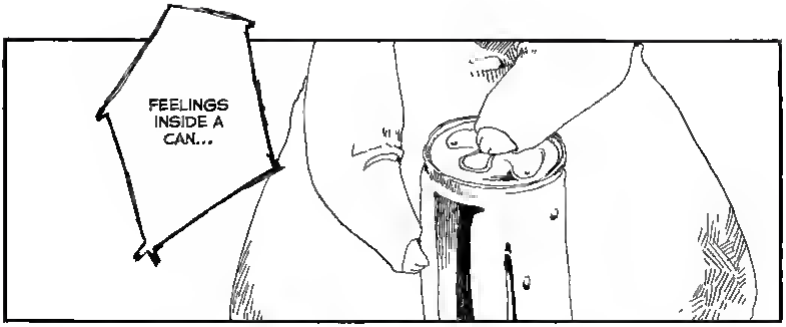
Please put us inside her dream.
INSIDE HER DREAM, HUH?
IT CAN'T BE DONE

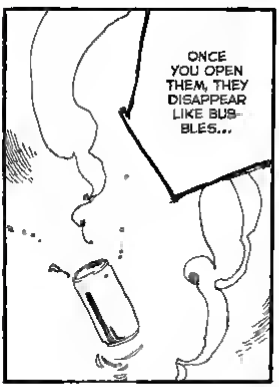
GOD DECIDES THE DREAMS. IT'S NOT ANYTHING YOU AND I COULD CONTROL.
MANAGER!!?
THIS IS A CONVENIENCE STORE, NOT A PLACE TO CREATE DREAMS
OH MY. IT SEEMS THAT IF YOUR FEELINGS ARE SO STRONG
THEY SCATTER ALL THE MORE—
Please.
I CAN'T.
Please.
I'M JUST A NOBODY WORKING HERE
I REALLY CAN'T.
THOSE TWO AND THE MANAGER ARE FILLED WITH SADNESS.

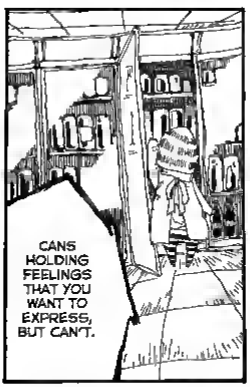
where can the two of us go?
Then...
THEY'RE DISAPPEARING!?
Swoosh
PLEASE DO SOMETHING!!!
MANAGER?!

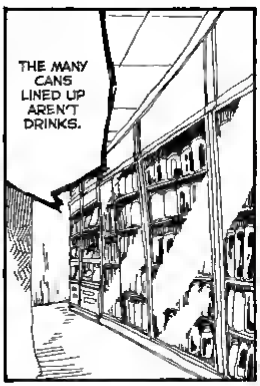
pop


THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I SAW...





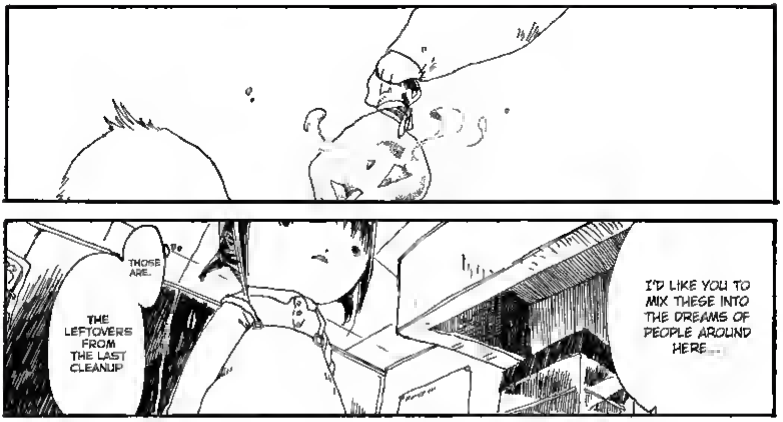




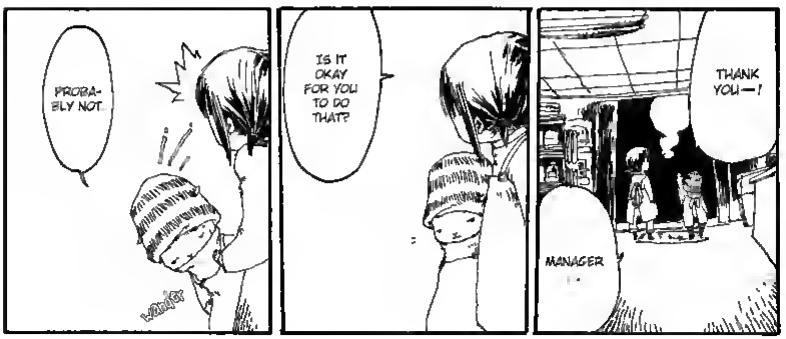
THE ONLY THING THE MANAGER CAN DO...

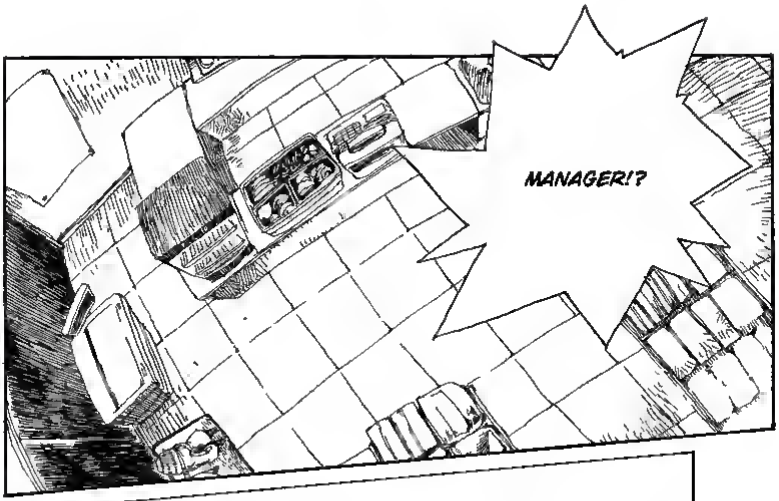
IS TO PRESERVE PEOPLE'S FEELINGS...

WELCOME!
YOU'RE ALWAYS STARING OUT THE WINDOW...
MANA-GER—
THE MANAGER LOOKED DOWN FOR A WHILE,
YOU HAVE CUSTO-MERS—
BUT SHE QUICKLY RECOVERED.
AH,
WELCOME—
BUT MAYBE I'LL HEAR THEM IF I STAY LONG ENOUGH.
THEN HOW ABOUT DOING THIS?
THE CARRIERS' VOICES DON'T REACH ME,
OH, I SEE, YOU'RE GOING OVER THERE



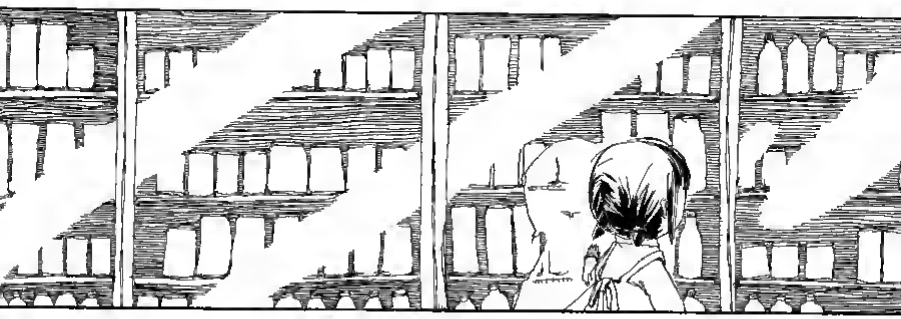
"INSIDE HER DREAM..."





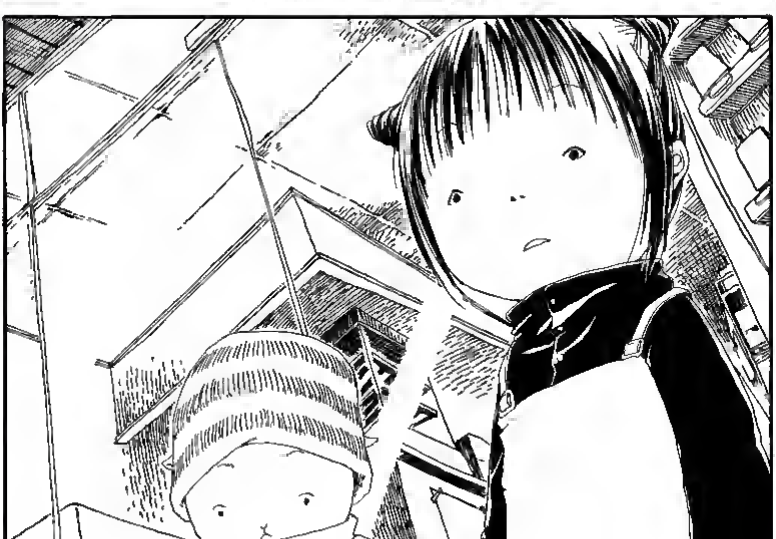
THE MANAGER COULDN'T TAKE CARE OF THE STORE BECAUSE OF A STOMACHACHE.

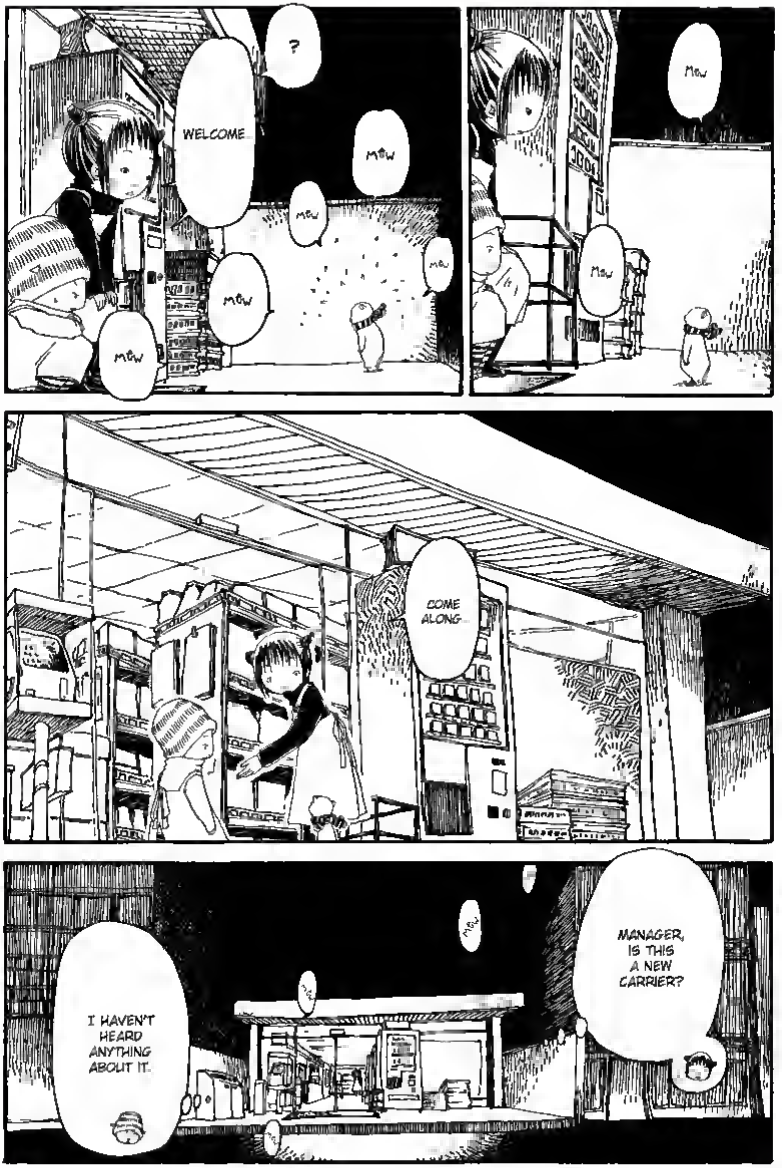
GOD SURELY EXISTS AND WATCHES OVER US.



WHEN THAT TIME
COMES, I'M AFRAID I'LL
CAUSE THE MANAGER
SOME TROUBLE.

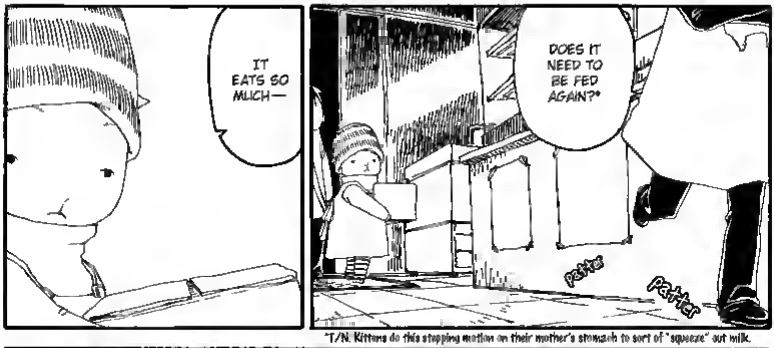
Kitten
Mew



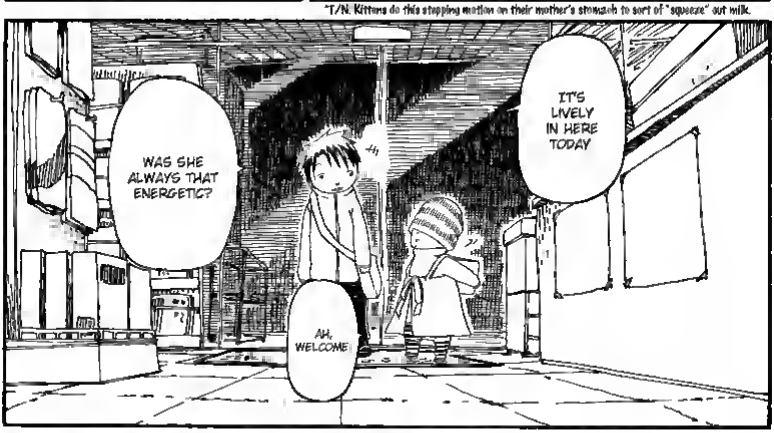

?
WELCOME
MEW
MEW
MEW
MEW
MEW
MEW
MEW
COME ALONG
MEW
MANAGER, IS THIS A NEW CARRIER?
I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

MEW
MEW
WHAT!?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND A WORD IT'S SAYING...
THIS IS BAD
PURR
PURR
I WONDER IF IT'S LOST IS IT STILL A KITTEN?
IF IT STAYS LONG ENOUGH, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO UNDER-STAND IT.
MEW
MEW
IT'S SO CUTE, THOUGH
MEW
MEW

PANT
PANT
MEW
MEW
MEW
MEW MEW
I CAN'T CONCENTRATE AT ALL!
MANAGER, I'M IN TROUBLE
HUH?
EEK—!
Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press
Press
IT'S HARD, THOUGH
TRAIN YOURSELF

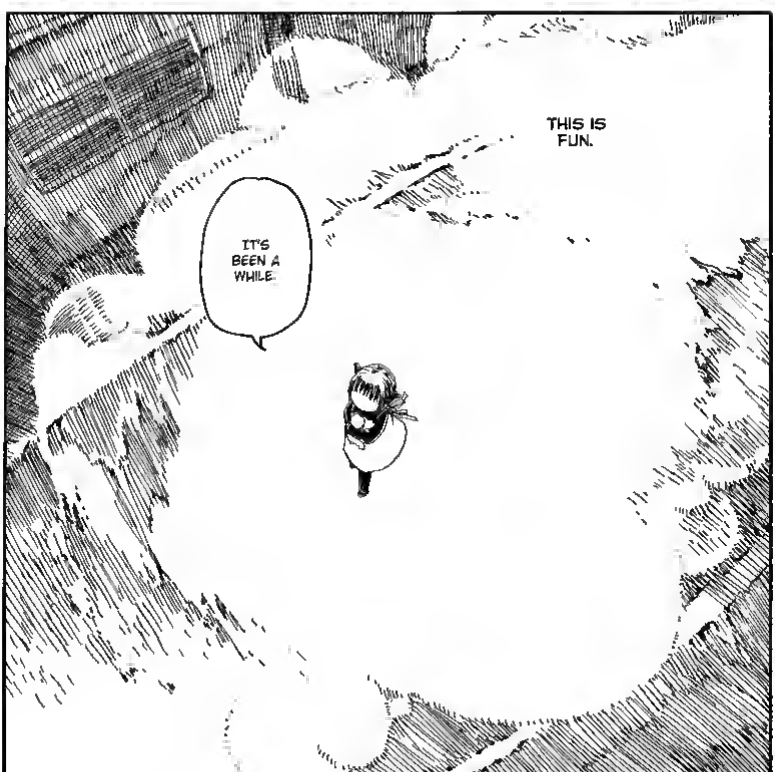


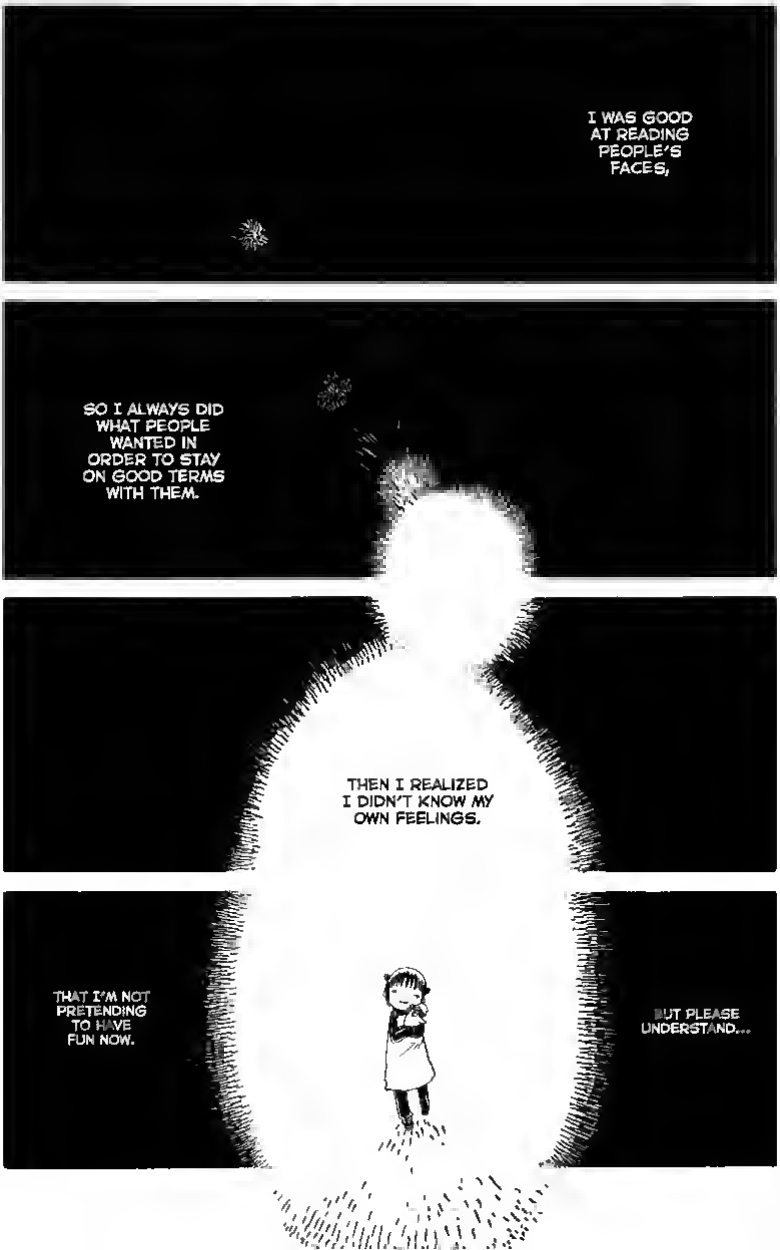
*T/N: Kittens do this stepping motion on their mother's stomach to sort of "squeeze" out milk.



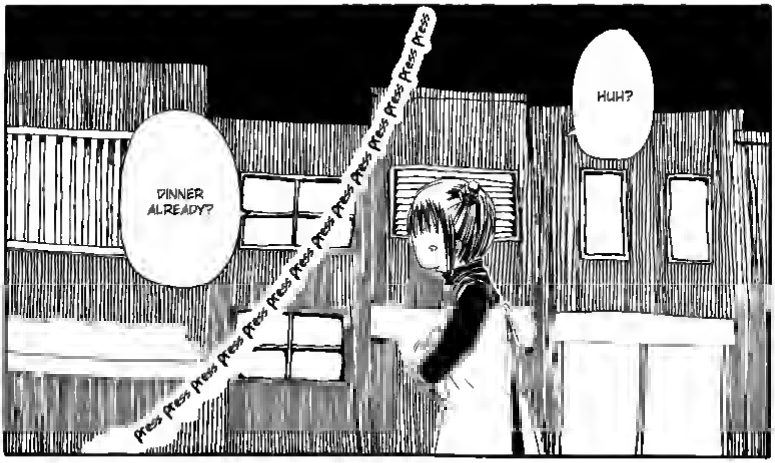
...ALRIGHT, BUT. .
AREN'T YOU BEING A BIT OVER-PROTECTIVE?
MAY I GO ON BREAK NOW?
MANAGER
ZOOM
ALRIGHT! I'LL SEE YOU LATER—
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
BE SURE TO GET SOME WORK DONE.
INSTEAD OF JUST HOVERING OVER THE KITTEN.
IT'S SO CUTE.
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE WALKED AROUND THIS TOWN

WHAT SHOULD WE DO—?
LET'S PLAY AROUND TILL WE GET HUNGRY


THIS IS FUN.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE


I WAS GOOD AT READING PEOPLE'S FACES,
SO I ALWAYS DID WHAT PEOPLE WANTED IN ORDER TO STAY ON GOOD TERMS WITH THEM.
THEN I REALIZED I DIDN'T KNOW MY OWN FEELINGS.
THAT I'M NOT PRETENDING TO HAVE FUN NOW.
BUT PLEASE UNDERSTAND...

wave
A CAT GAME..
SO, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
LET'S SEE—
mew
A CAT'S FEELINGS.
mew
mew
mew
SWISH
SWISH
yawn
press
THAT WAS FUN.
mew
hi
hi
mew


HUH?
DINNER ALREADY?
Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press Press

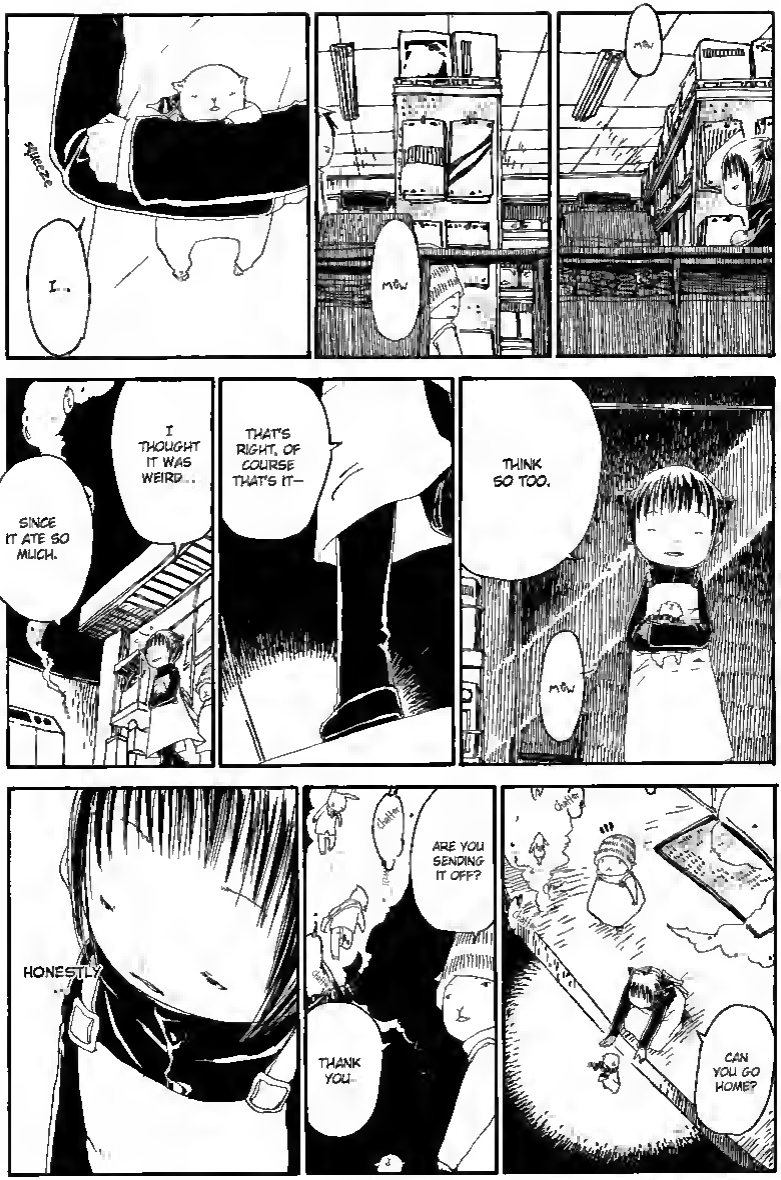
HUH? BUT I THOUGHT YOU LIKED THE KITTEN
OF COURSE I DO

I KNEW THAT KITTEN SHOULDN'T HAVE STAYED HERE
I'LL GO FIND THOSE TWO

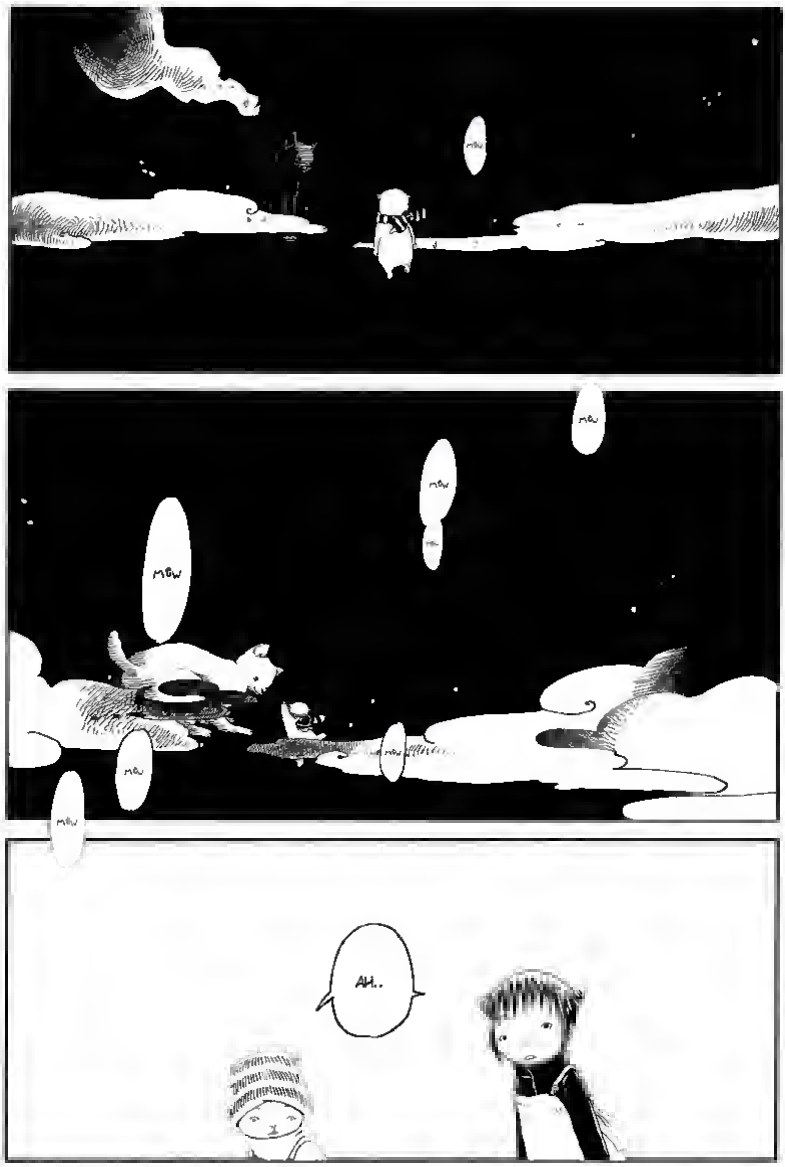
BUT SOMETHING'S DIFFERENT ABOUT IT...

THOSE WHO COME TO THIS LAND WHERE DREAMS ARE MADE ARE NEARING DEATH
THOUGH SOMETIMES THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE YOU, WHO STUMBLE IN DURING A DEEP SLUMBER.
YES, IT'S VERY HEALTHY THAT'S WHY I'M WORRIED.
THAT KITTEN...
THAT KITTEN EATS A LOT.
SO IT'S HEALTHY.
IS JUST A BABY STRUGGLING TO LIVE.
IT HAPPENED WHEN IT WAS SO YOUNG, THAT'S WHY IT COULDN'T SPEAK.
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T LET IT STAY HERE FOREVER.
IT'S STUCK BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.
RIGHT?

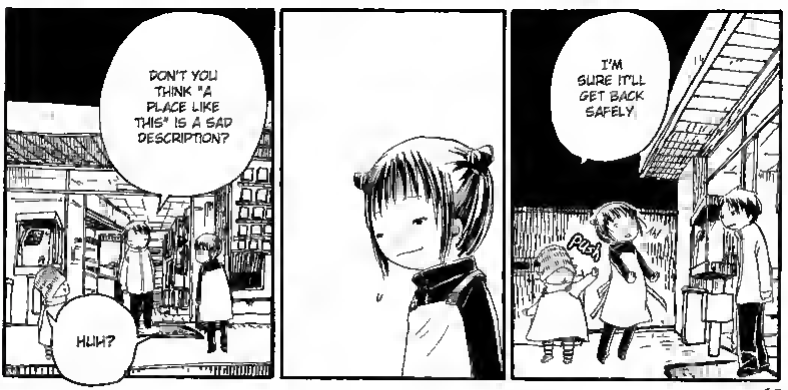
SO LET'S RETURN IT BACK HOME
DOES IT WANT THAT?
I DON'T THINK IT'S ALONE.
IT'S MOST LIKELY SLEEPING SURROUNDED BY OTHERS.

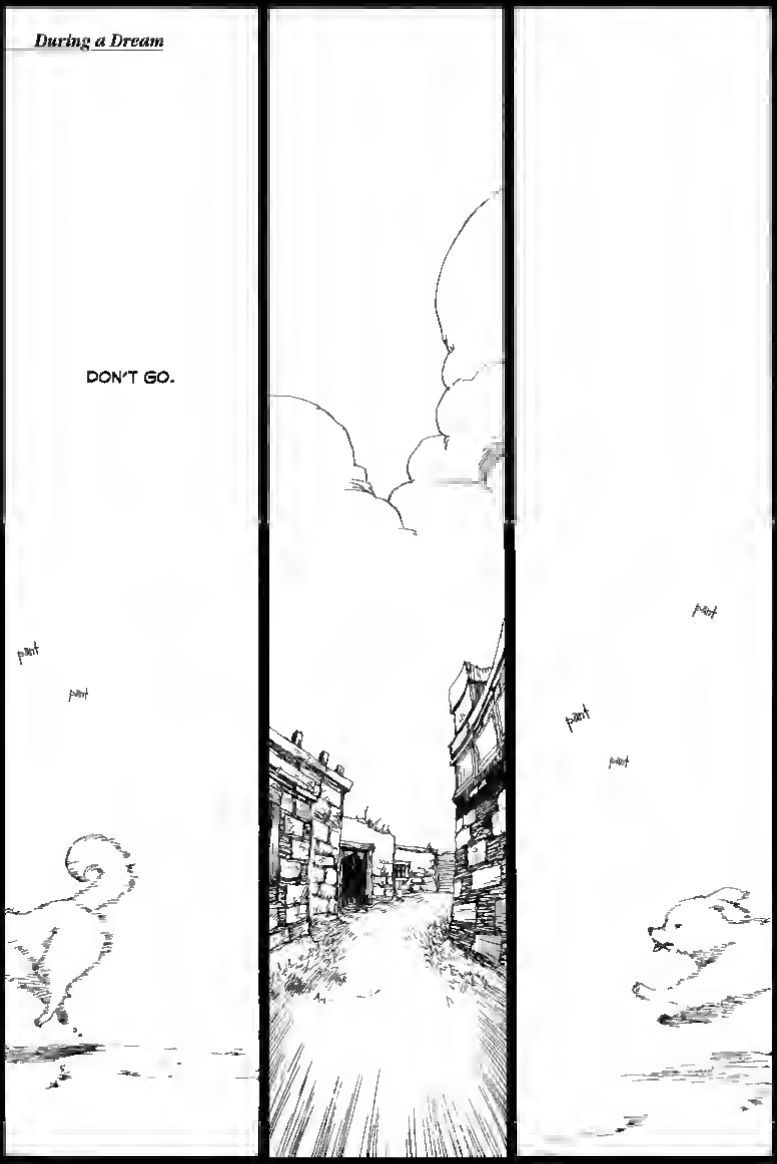

SQUEEZE
I...
MEW
MEW
I THOUGHT IT WAS WEIRD...
SINCE IT ATE SO MUCH.
THAT'S RIGHT, OF COURSE THAT'S IT—
THINK SO TOO.
MEW
HONESTLY...
ARE YOU SENDING IT OFF?
THANK YOU.
CAN YOU GO HOME?

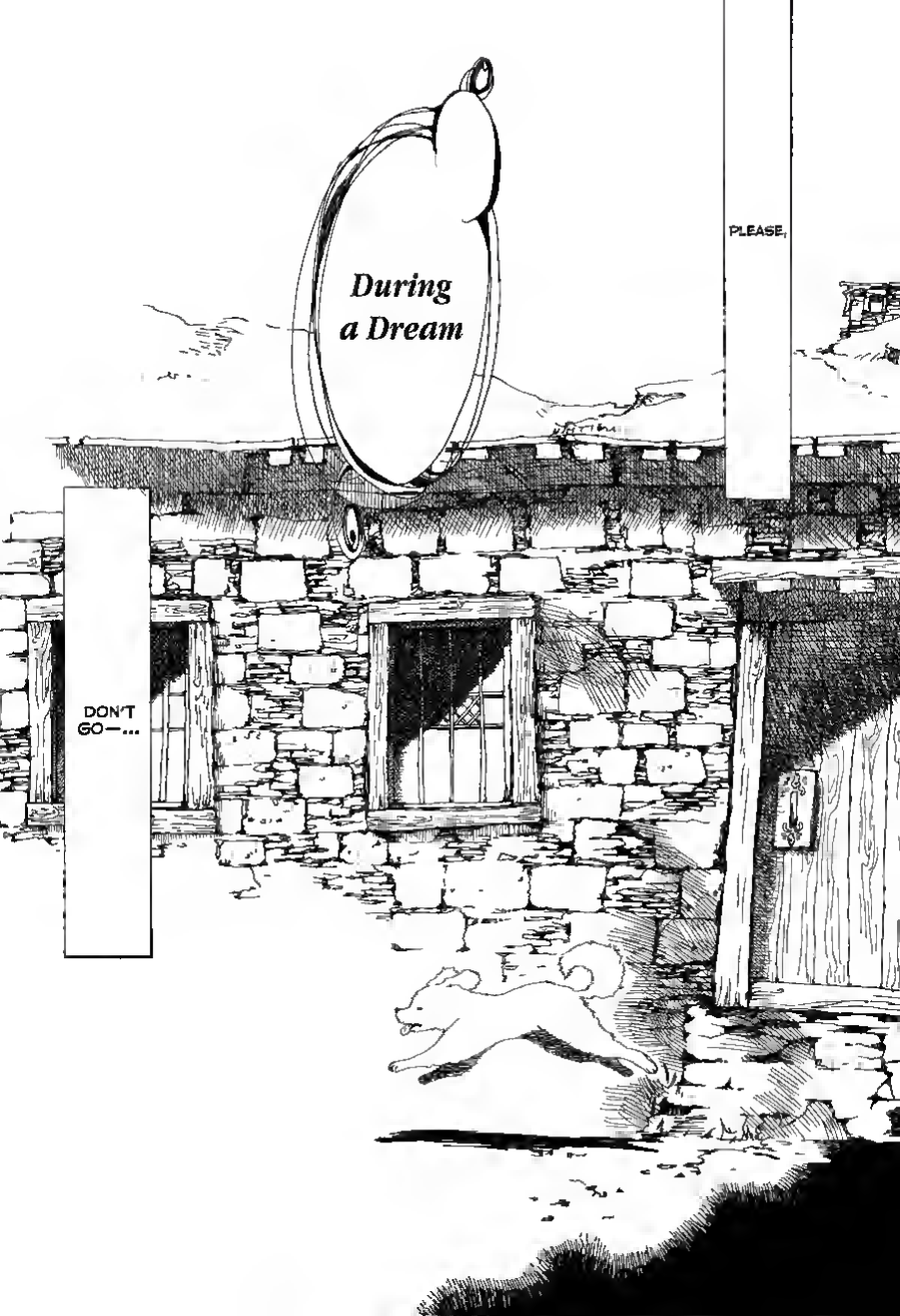
MEW
MŌW
MŌW
I WANTED TO BE A LITTLE SELFISH.

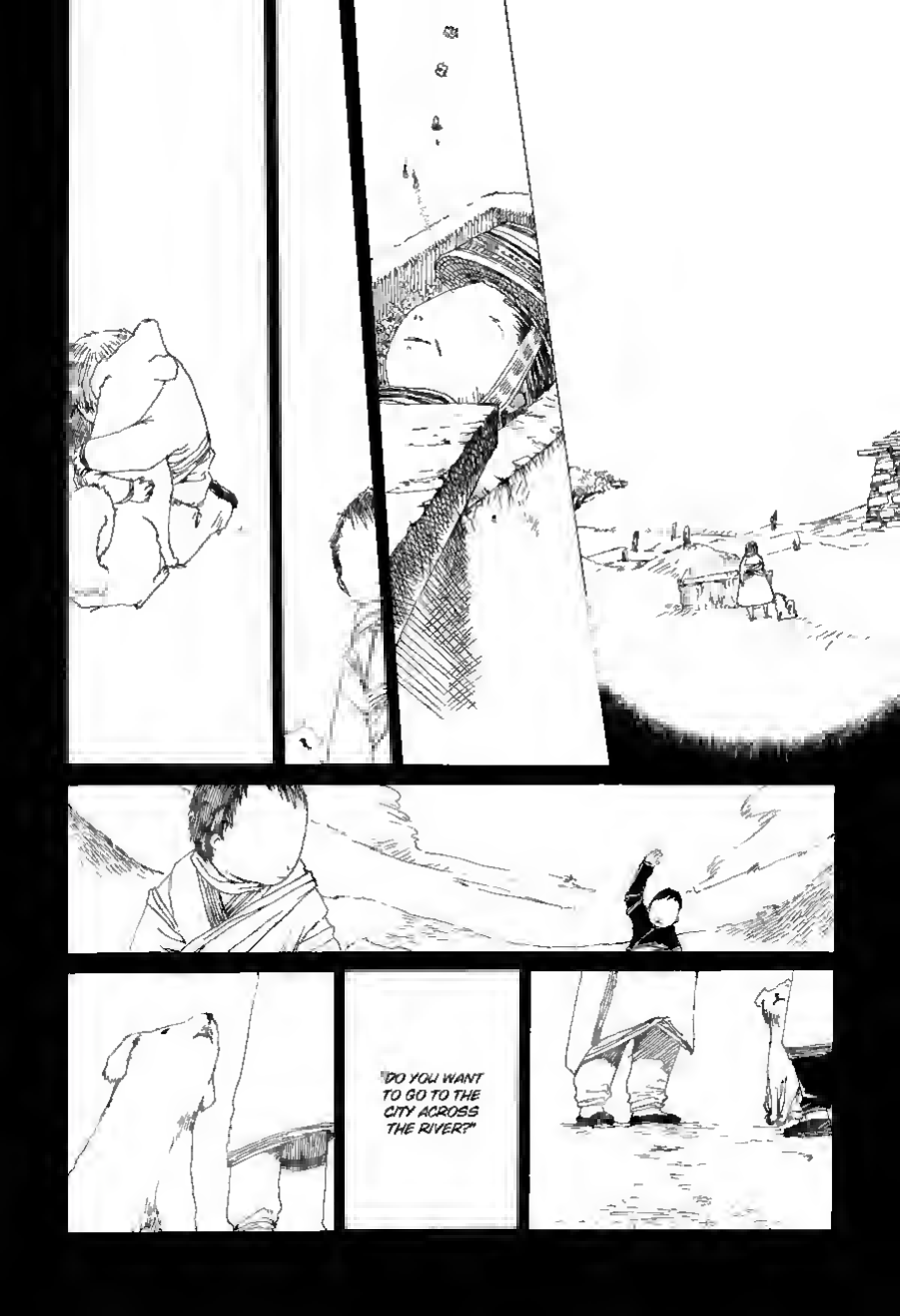

mew
mew
mew
mew
MEW
mew
mew
AH..

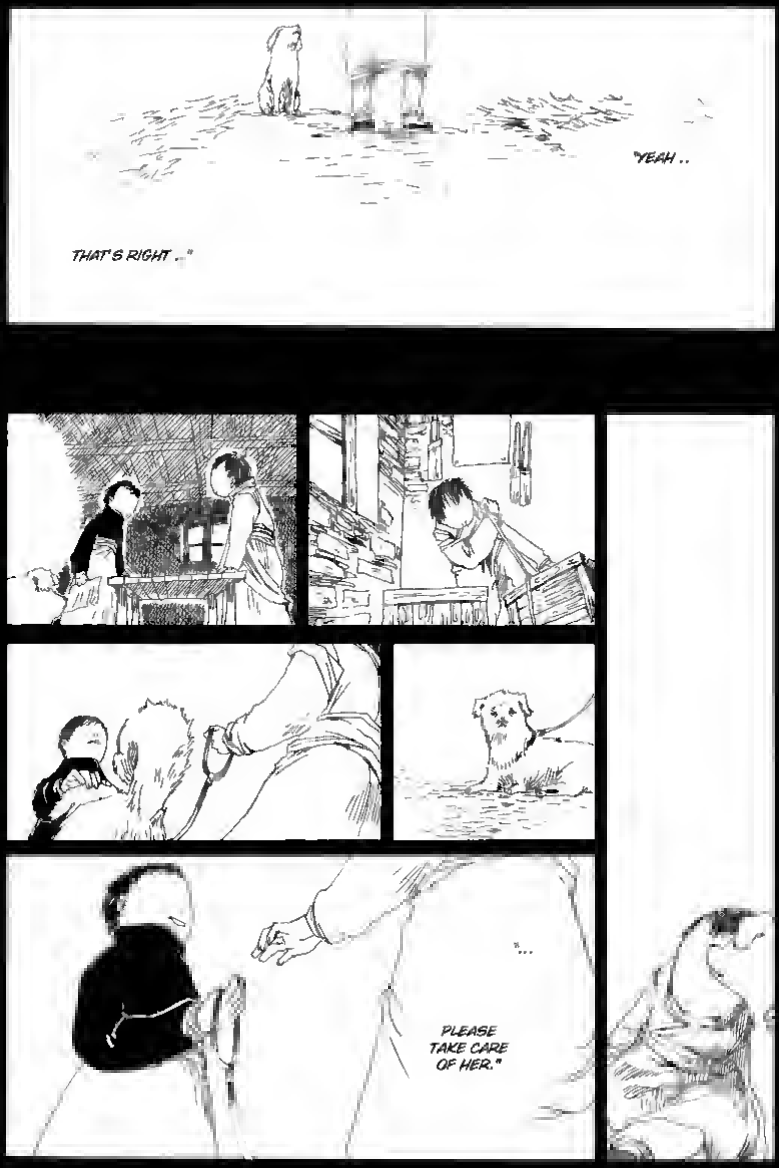
ITS MOTHER
CAME ALL THE WAY TO A PLACE LIKE THIS TO PICK IT UP.


DON'T YOU THINK "A PLACE LIKE THIS" IS A SAD DESCRIPTION?
HUH?
I'M SURE IT'LL GET BACK SAFELY.
PUFA


During a Dream
DON'T GO.

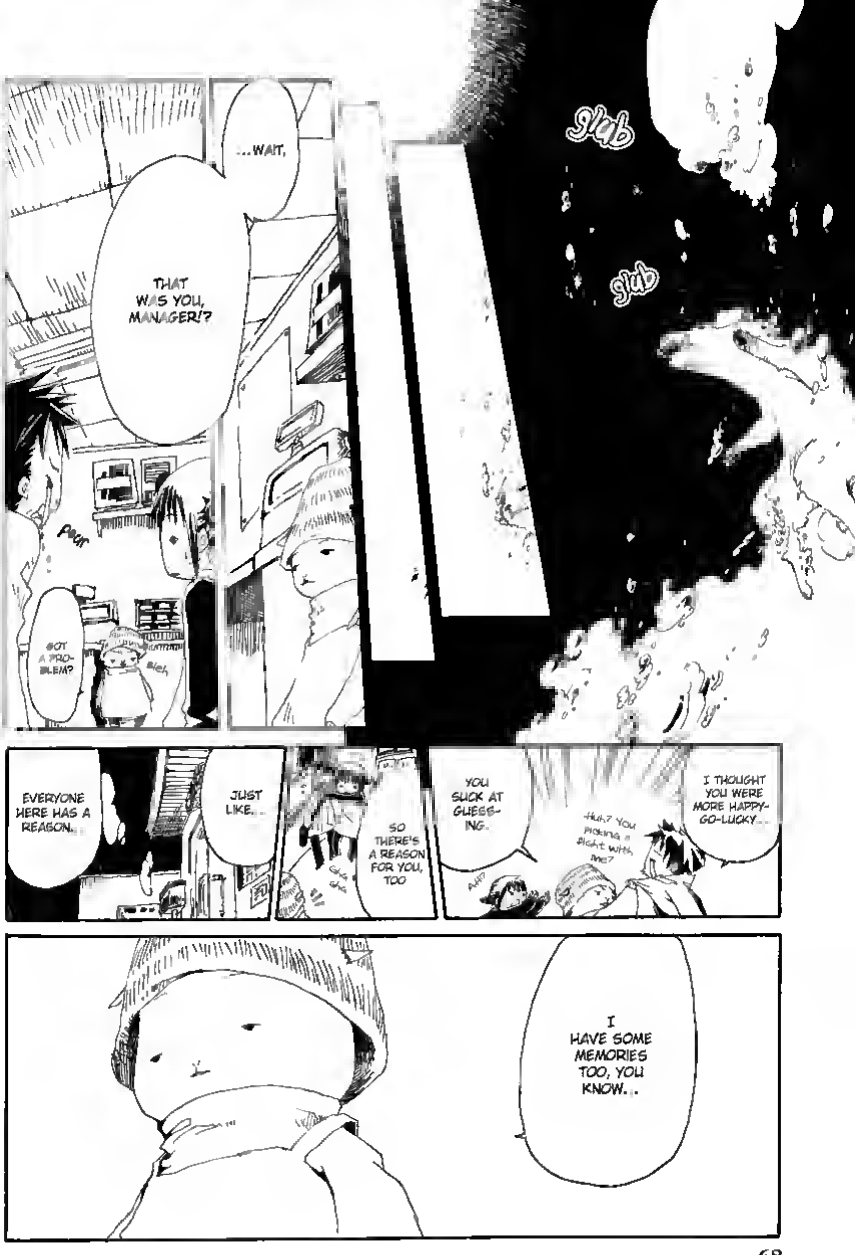

During a Dream
PLEASE,
DON'T GO—...


"DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE CITY ACROSS THE RIVER?"


"YEAH..
THAT'S RIGHT..."
"...
PLEASE
TAKE CARE
OF HER."

ACROSS THE RIVER...
LET'S GO TO THE CITY
DON'T GO...
pant
pant
pant

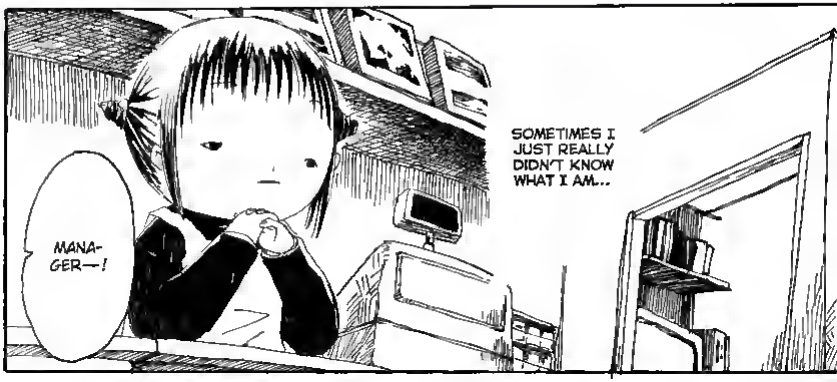
...
PLEASE WAIT FOR ME...


...WAIT,
THAT WAS YOU, MANAGER!?
Pssh
GOT A PROBLEM?
Bleh
Glub
Glub
EVERYONE HERE HAS A REASON...
JUST LIKE...
SO THERE'S A REASON FOR YOU, TOO
YOU SUCK AT GUESSING.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE HAPPY-GO-LUCKY...
Huh? You picking a fight with me?
I HAVE SOME MEMORIES TOO, YOU KNOW...

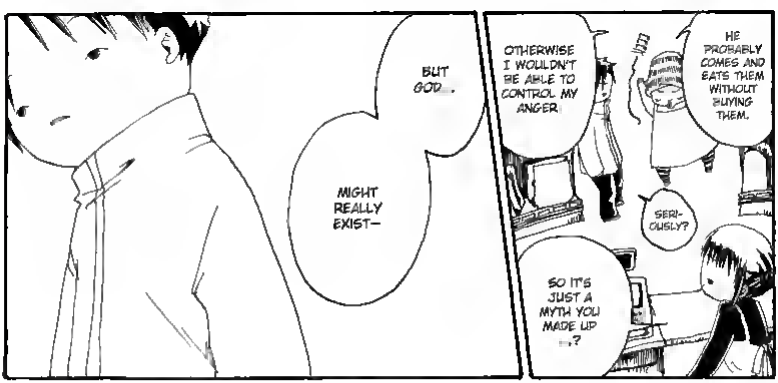
I WATCHED MYSELF BEING WASHED ASHORE
OH, NO WAY
DON'T WATCH.
That's freaky
Splas
float
?
MAYBE THE MANAGER'S JUST SLEEPING OR UNCONSCIOUS
MAYBE IT'S JUST A DREAM...
pant pant
pant pant
MANA-GER
MAYBE THE MANAGER IS WAITING FOR HER OWNER...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET YOUR OWNER?
THAT WOULD BE NICE

I THINK I MIGHT GO BACK
PROBABLY OUT ORDERING THINGS
WHERE'S THE MANAGER?
I SEE.
YO.
PLUS, I FEEL LIGHT-HEARTED.
THESE DAYS, MY MEMORY'S GETTING CUT OFF.
I'M PROBABLY WAKING UP FROM MY COMA.
AH, WELCOME.
THAT'S GOOD.

HUH? GOING BACK!?
WHAT SHOULD I SAY?
IT FEELS SO UNREAL...
SWOOSH
OH YEAH! THAT'S GREAT!
IF YOU WAKE UP, YOU CAN TELL EVERYONE YOUR FEELINGS DIRECTLY.
I DIDN'T FEEL ANYTHING.
BUT IT'LL BE LONELY!!
BEEP!
WHEN YOUR WORDS DON'T HOLD ANY WEIGHT,
I LAUGHED WHEN NOTHING WAS FUNNY,
AND I DIDN'T CRY ANYMORE
EVEN WHEN I WENT TO SCHOOL OR WATCHED TV...
IT FELT SO THIN, SO UNREAL.
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING?


MANA-GER—!
SOMETIMES I JUST REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I AM...

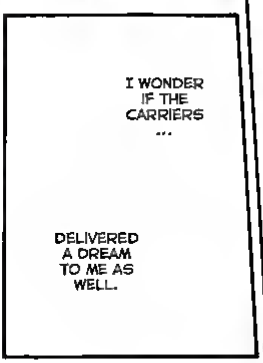
DOES GOD COME HERE?
!
YUP.
I just want a small bite.
Like this?
IT MUST BE GOD PLAYING TRICKS.
IT HAPPENS SOMETIMES, BUT IT'S ALWAYS IRRITATING!
OH REALLY?
ONE OF THE SNACKS IS OPEN!


BUT GOD...
MIGHT REALLY EXIST—
OTHERWISE I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CONTROL MY ANGER.
HE PROBABLY COMES AND EATS THEM WITHOUT BUYING THEM.
SERI-OUSLY?
SO IT'S JUST A MYTH YOU MADE UP ...?

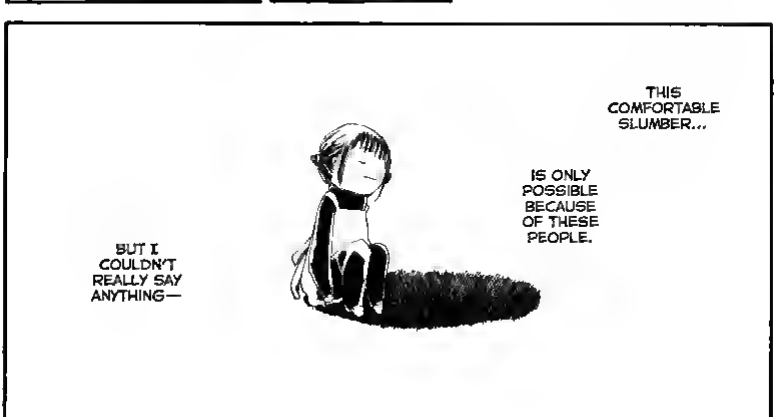
BUT HE WAS CRYING BECAUSE HE COULDN'T SAY THEM WITH HIS OWN WORDS.
HE GOT INTO AN ACCIDENT AT A YOUNG AGE, BUT HE HAD SO MANY THINGS HE DIDN'T FINISH THAT HE COULDN'T REST IN PEACE.
SO IF A MIRACLE WERE TO HAPPEN FOR HIM…
THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS HE WANTED TO SAY TO THE PEOPLE AWAITING HIS RETURN…
WELL, I'M NOT EXPECTING IT.
IF THERE ARE SUCH THINGS AS MIRACLES.
YEAH?
MANAGER.
GOD EXISTS, BUT HE WON'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU!
OH MY
EVEN WHEN I STARTED THIS STORE, GOD—
MIGHT ALSO COME HERE TO LEAVE HIS PRECIOUS FEELINGS.
THE PERSON IMPORTANT TO YOU…

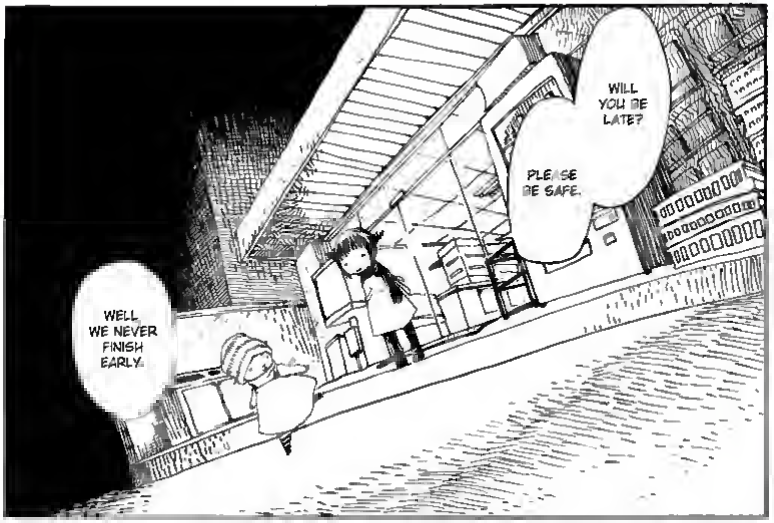
LET'S CELEBRATE.
FOR HIM.
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH

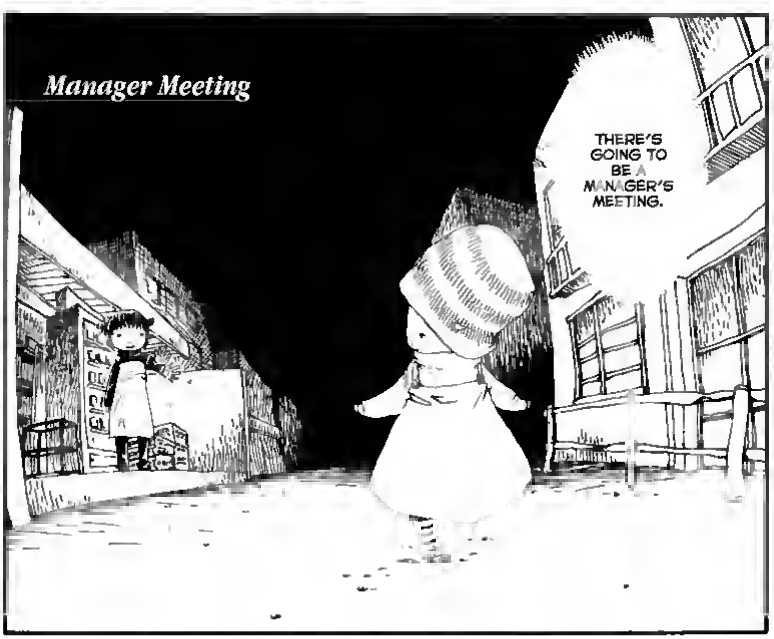
SINCE NO ONE SCOLDS ME MUCH.
HE—Y!

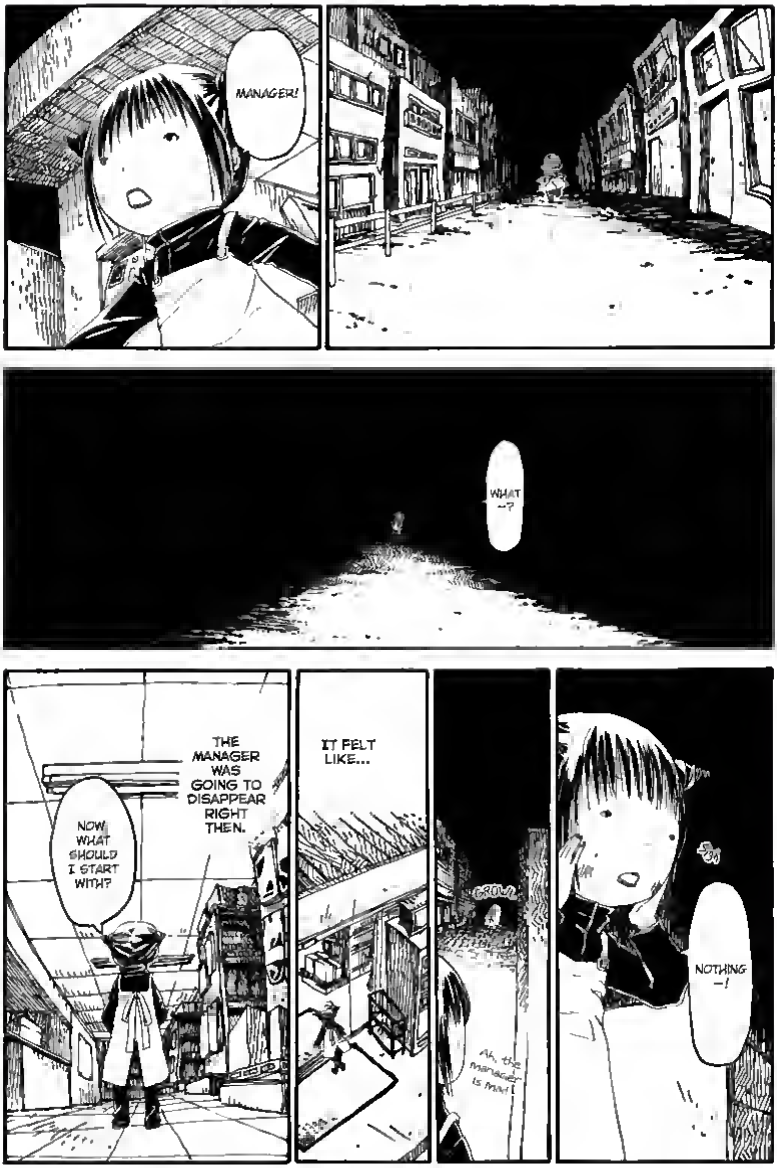

I WONDER IF THE CARRIERS ...
DELIVERED A DREAM TO ME AS WELL.

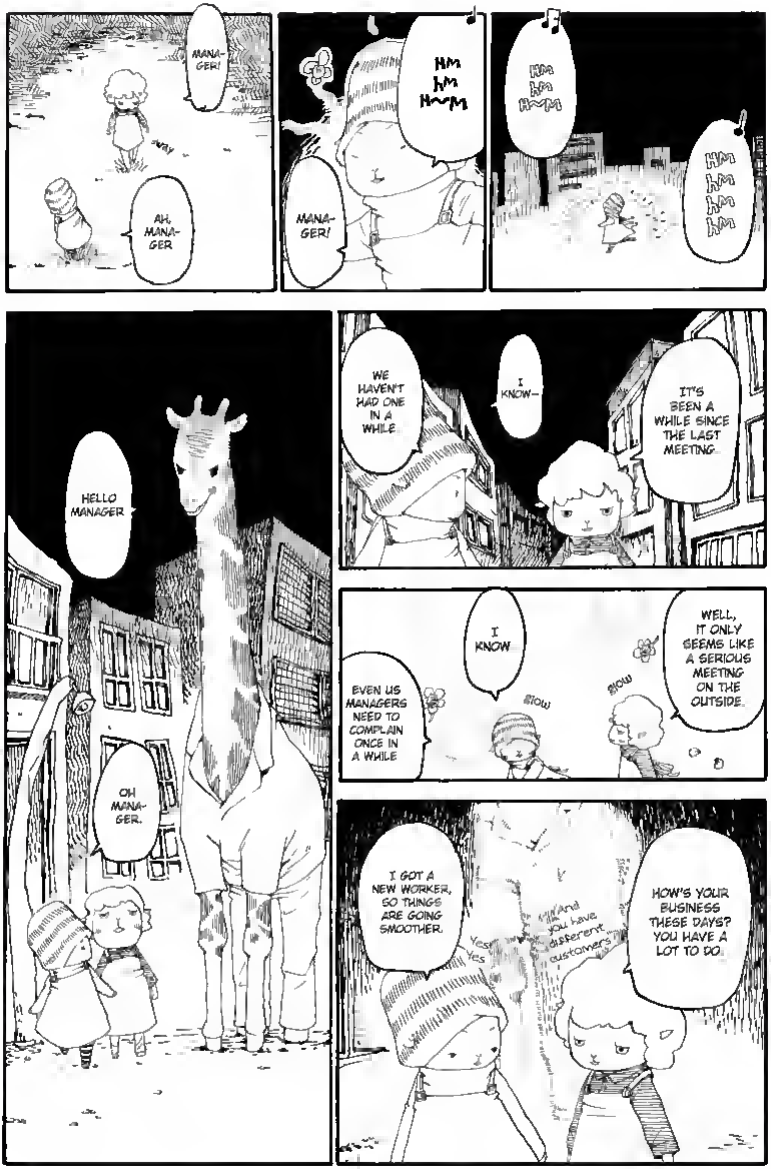
IF THIS WORLD IS A DREAM,
EH?
Just open it
THEN I DON'T NEED TO WAKE UP.
Go on!


THIS COMFORTABLE SLUMBER...
IS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THESE PEOPLE.
BUT I COULDN'T REALLY SAY ANYTHING—

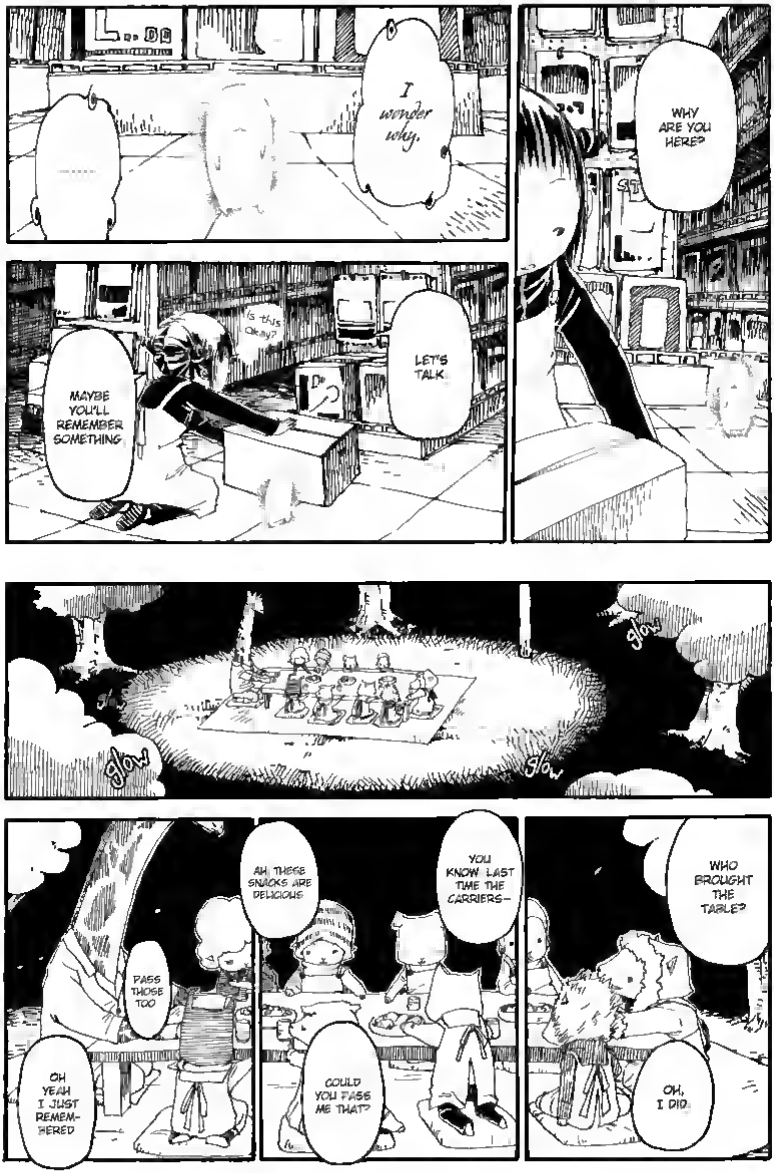

WILL YOU BE LATE?
PLEASE BE SAFE.
WELL, WE NEVER FINISH EARLY.


Manager Meeting
THERE'S GOING TO BE A MANAGER'S MEETING.

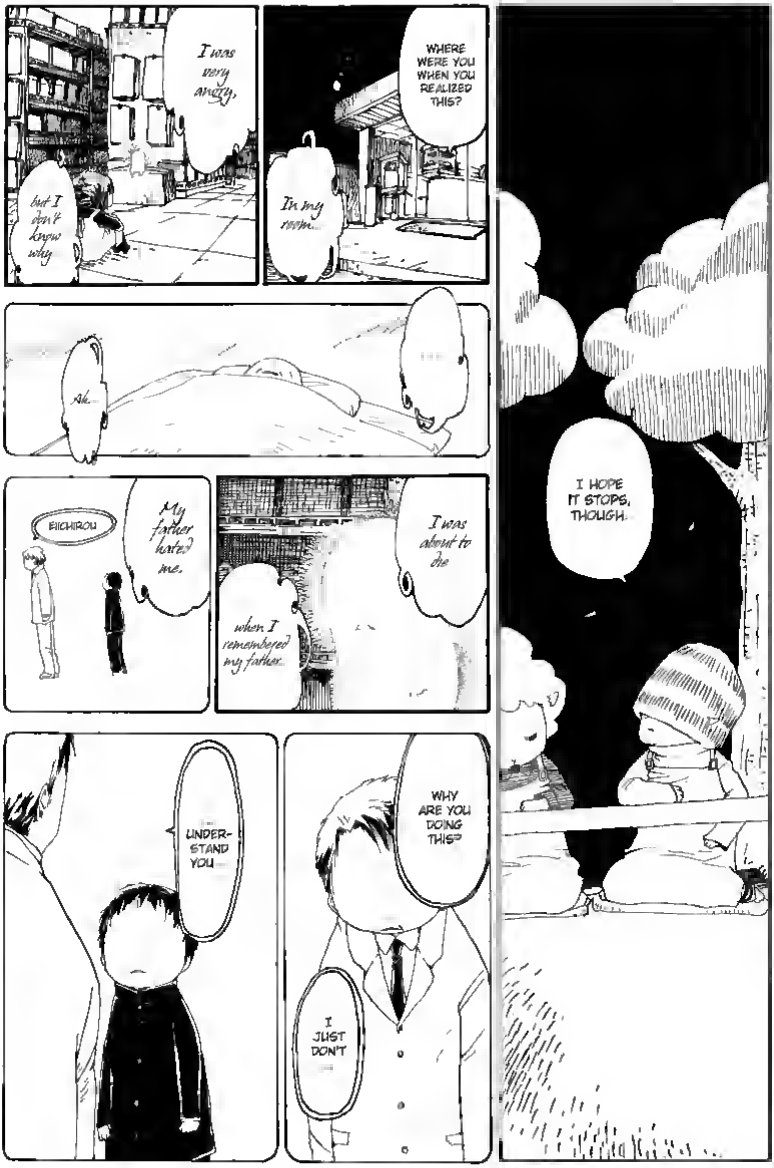

MANAGER!
WHAT —?
NOW, WHAT SHOULD I START WITH?
THE MANAGER WAS GOING TO DISAPPEAR RIGHT THEN.
IT FELT LIKE...
GROW
Ah, the manager is mine!
NOTHING —!

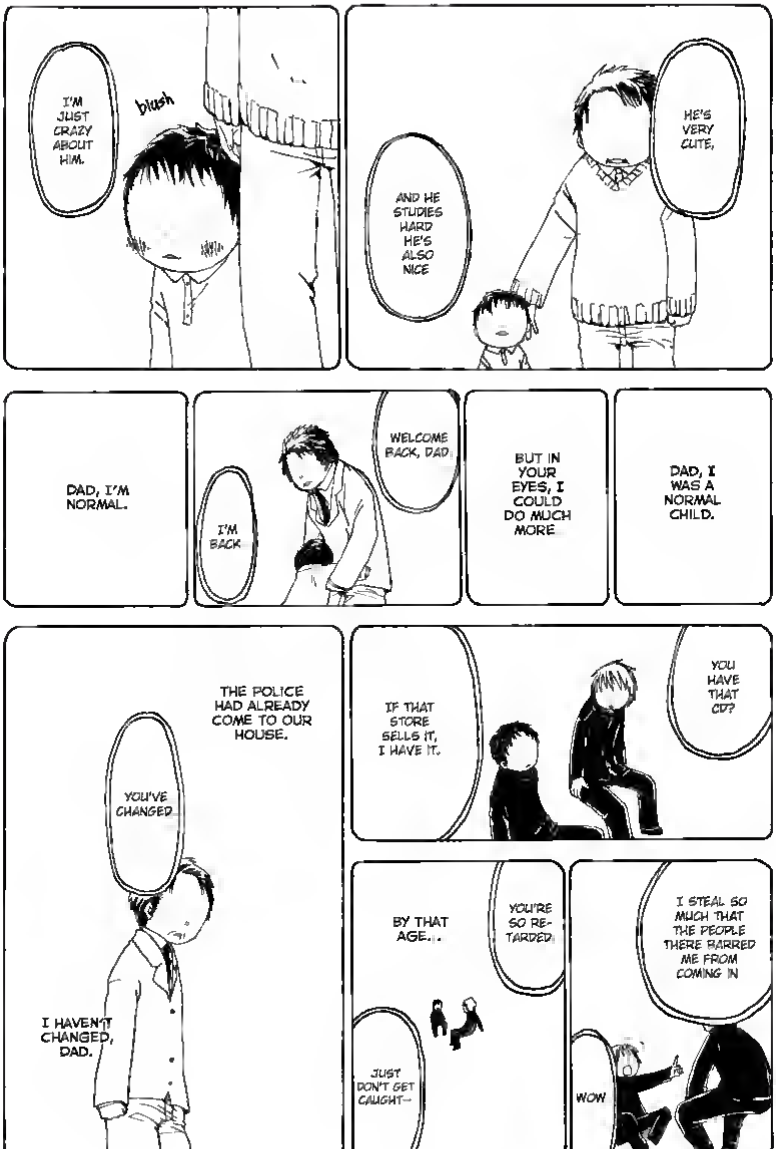

MANA-GER!
WAY
AH, MANA-GER
HM HM HMM
MANA-GER!
HM HM HMM
HM HM HM HM
HELLO MANAGER
OH MANA-GER.
WE HAVEN'T HAD ONE IN A WHILE
I KNOW—
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THE LAST MEETING
EVEN US MANAGERS NEED TO COMPLAIN ONCE IN A WHILE
I KNOW
BOW
BOW
WELL, IT ONLY SEEMS LIKE A SERIOUS MEETING ON THE OUTSIDE.
I GOT A NEW WORKER, SO THINGS ARE GOING SMOOTHER.
YES! YES
And you have different customers!
HOW'S YOUR BUSINESS THESE DAYS? YOU HAVE A LOT TO DO.

Hello.
where am I?
ER, UM...
IF I may ask...
WEL-COME
I WONDER IF THIS CUSTOMER WANTS TO SEAL HIS FEELINGS HERE...!
T--THIS IS A CONVENIENCE STORE
Conve-nience store?
IF THE MANAGER WERE HERE...

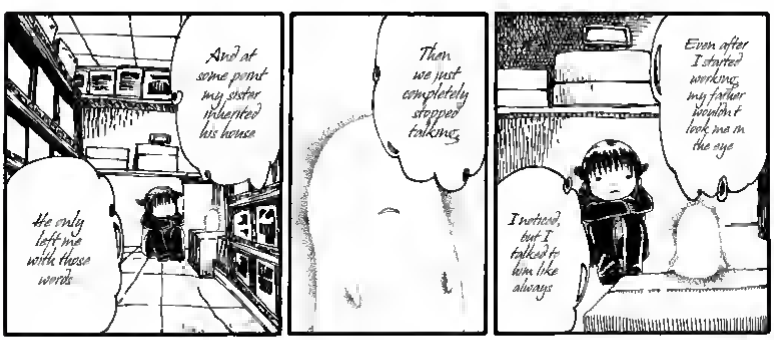

I wonder why.
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
LET'S TALK.
Is this okay?
MAYBE YOU'LL REMEMBER SOMETHING
glow
glow
glow
WHO BROUGHT THE TABLE?
OH, I DID.
YOU KNOW LAST TIME THE CARRIERS—
COULD YOU PASS ME THAT?
AH, THESE SNACKS ARE DELICIOUS
PASS THOSE TOO
OH YEAH I JUST REMEMBERED

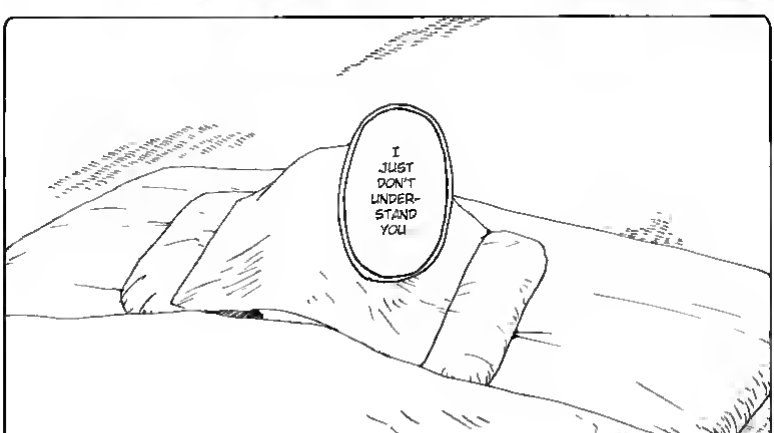
I SEE
SOMEONE WHO WANTED TO GIVE YOU THEIR FEELINGS
SO I TOLD HIM YOUR ADDRESS
JUST NOW...
THERE WAS A CUSTOMER OF YOURS IN MY STORE
OH
LIKE THIS?
Let's go to the store...!
THAT'S HOT!
Don't take it seriously
SOME STREET CONCERT
WHAT—!? WHERE'D YOU HEAR THAT?
I WONDER IF THAT'S OKAY. YOU ONLY HAVE THAT NEW GIRL
IT'S TOUGH DOING DIFFERENT JOBS
I HEARD GOD GOES TO THOSE PLACES A LOT
THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE WANTING TO LOCK AWAY FEELINGS
REALLY, THOUGH
THAT'S TRUE
THERE ARE MORE AND MORE,

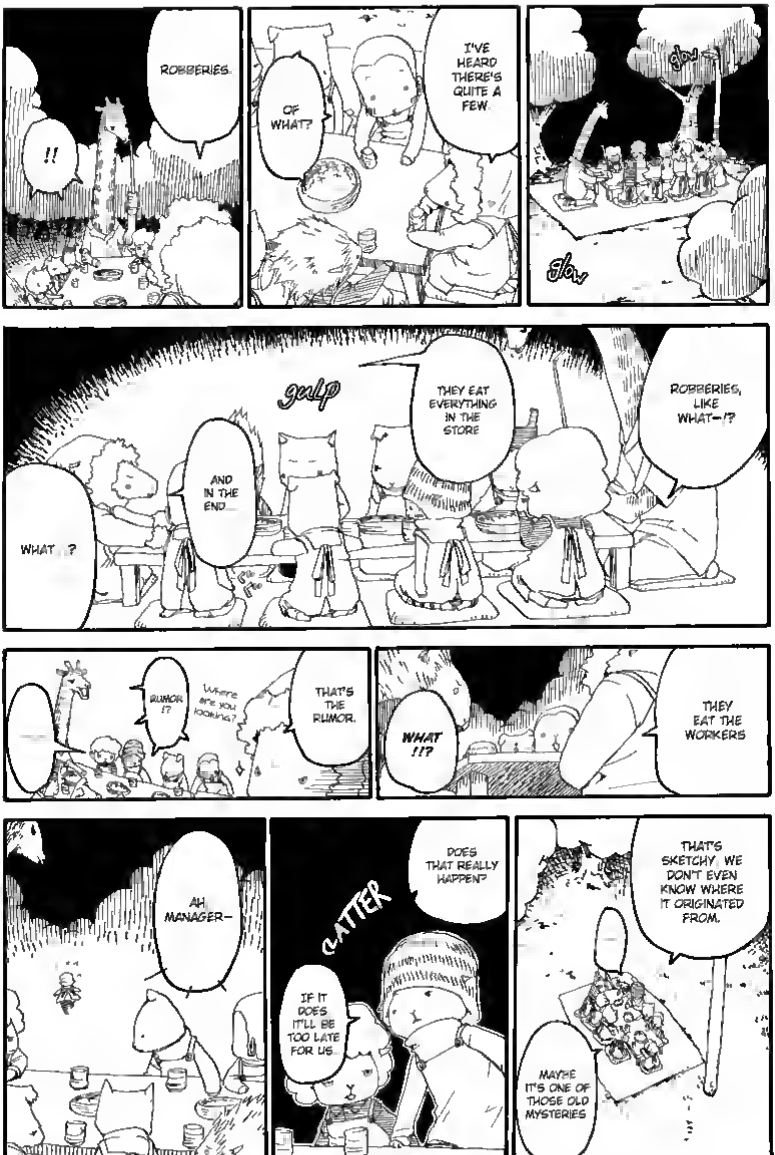

I was very angry,
but I don't know why
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN YOU REALIZED THIS?
In my room...
Ah...
EIICHIROU
My father hated me.
I was about to die
when I remembered my father.
UNDER-STAND YOU...
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
I JUST DON'T...
I HOPE IT STOPS, THOUGH.

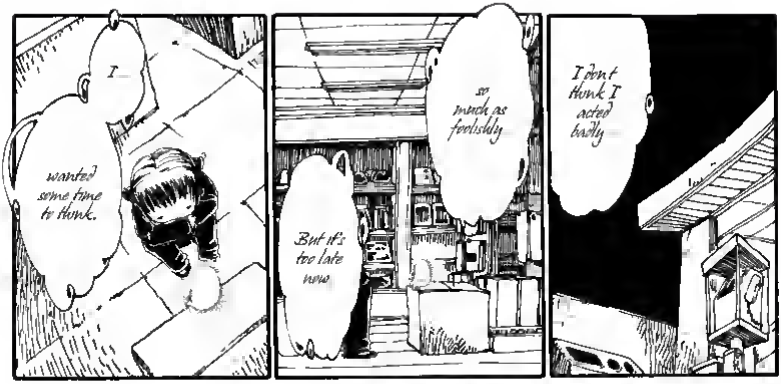

I'M JUST CRAZY ABOUT HIM.
blush
HE'S VERY CUTE,
AND HE STUDIES HARD HE'S ALSO NICE
DAD, I'M NORMAL.
I'M BACK
WELCOME BACK, DAD.
BUT IN YOUR EYES, I COULD DO MUCH MORE
DAD, I WAS A NORMAL CHILD.
THE POLICE HAD ALREADY COME TO OUR HOUSE.
YOU'VE CHANGED
I HAVEN'T CHANGED, DAD.
IF THAT STORE SELLS IT, I HAVE IT.
YOU HAVE THAT CD?
BY THAT AGE...
YOU'RE SO RETARDED!
JUST DON'T GET CAUGHT--
I STEAL SO MUCH THAT THE PEOPLE THERE BARRED ME FROM COMING IN
WOW

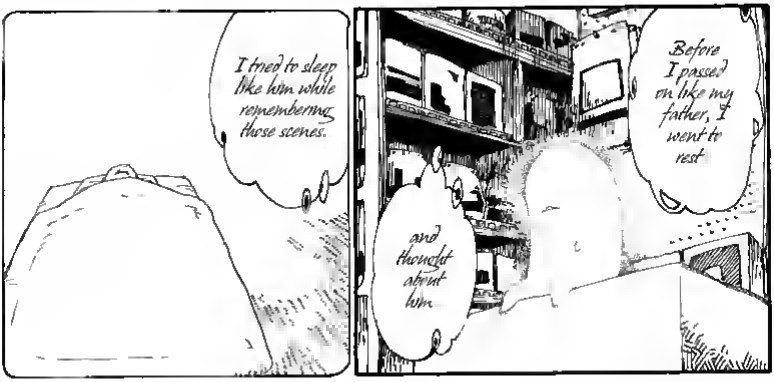
I'M NORMAL...


And at some point my sister inherited his house
He only left me with these words
Then we just completely stopped talking
Even after I started working, my father wouldn't look me in the eye
I noticed, but I talked to him like always

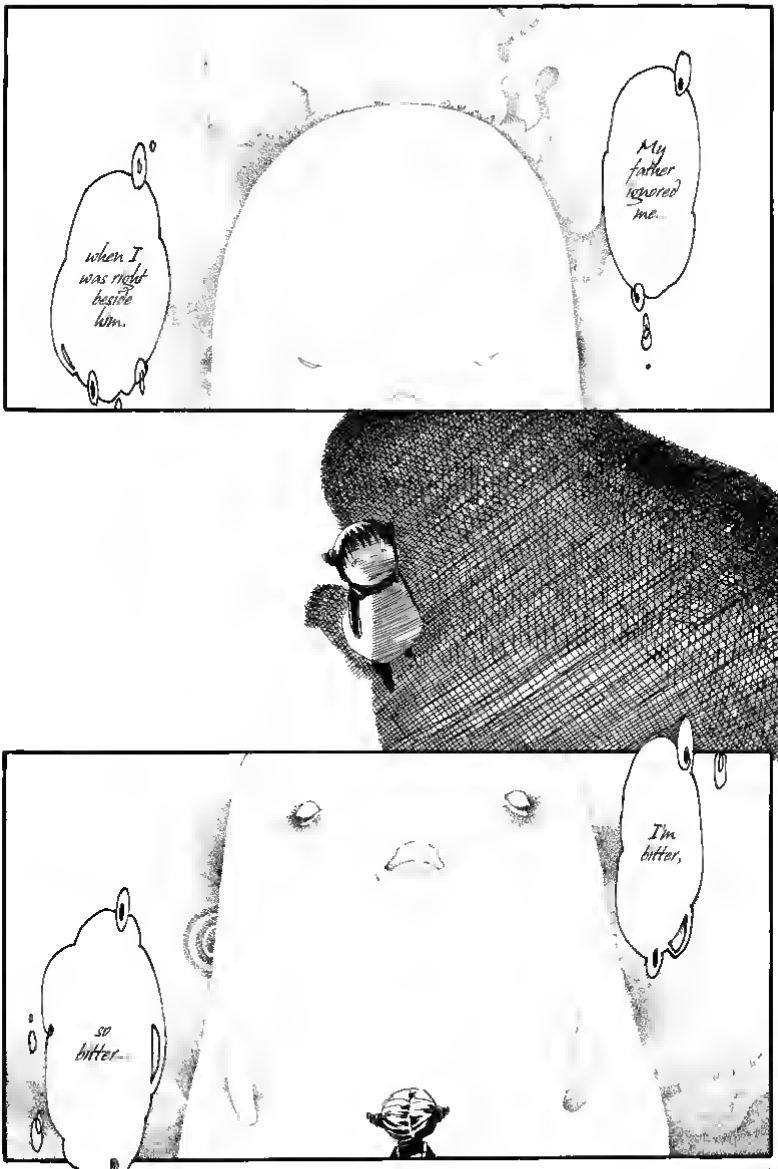

I JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND YOU

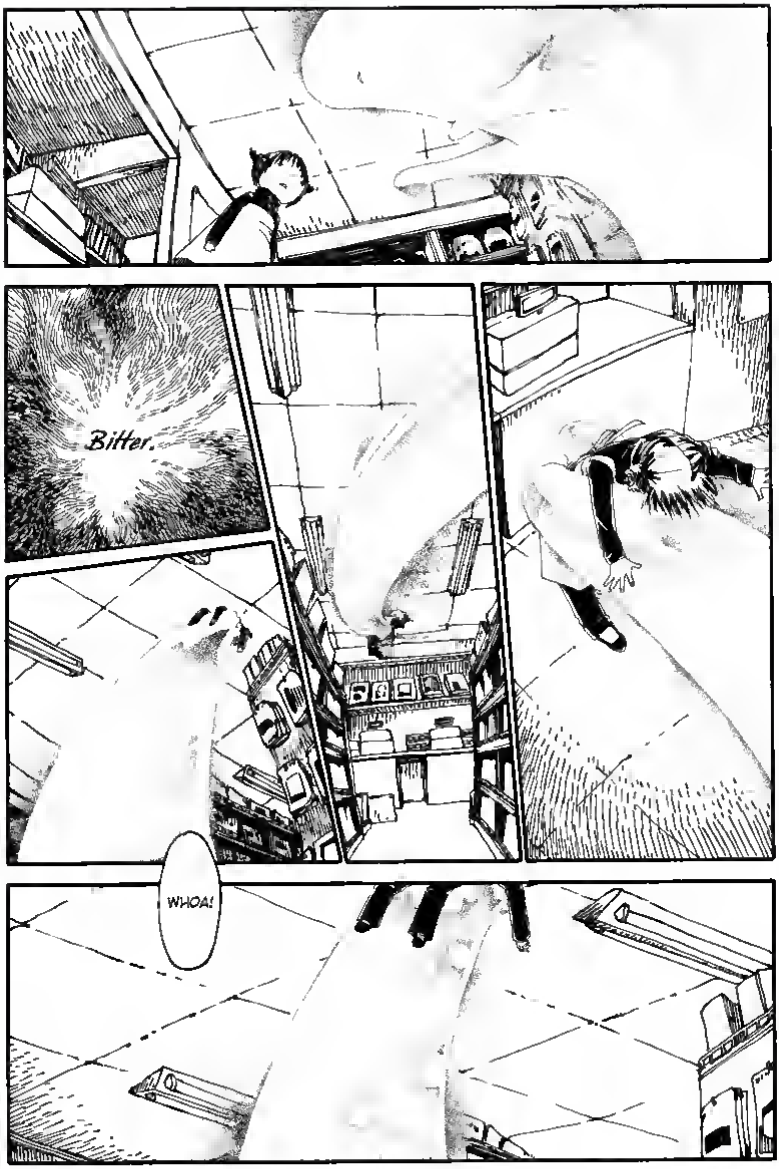

ROBBERIES.
!!
OF WHAT?
I'VE HEARD THERE'S QUITE A FEW.
Glow
Glow
gulp
THEY EAT EVERYTHING IN THE STORE
ROBBERIES, LIKE WHAT—!?
AND IN THE END...
WHAT...?
RUMOR, I?
Where are you looking?
THAT'S THE RUMOR.
WHAT!!?
THEY EAT THE WORKERS
AH, MANAGER—
DOES THAT REALLY HAPPEN?
CLATTER
IF IT DOES, IT'LL BE TOO LATE FOR US.
THAT'S SKETCHY. WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE IT ORIGINATED FROM.
MAYBE IT'S ONE OF THOSE OLD MYSTERIES


I wanted some time to think.
But it's too late now
so much as foolishly
I don't think I acted badly


I tried to sleep like him while remembering those scenes.
and thought about him
Before I passed on like my father, I went to rest

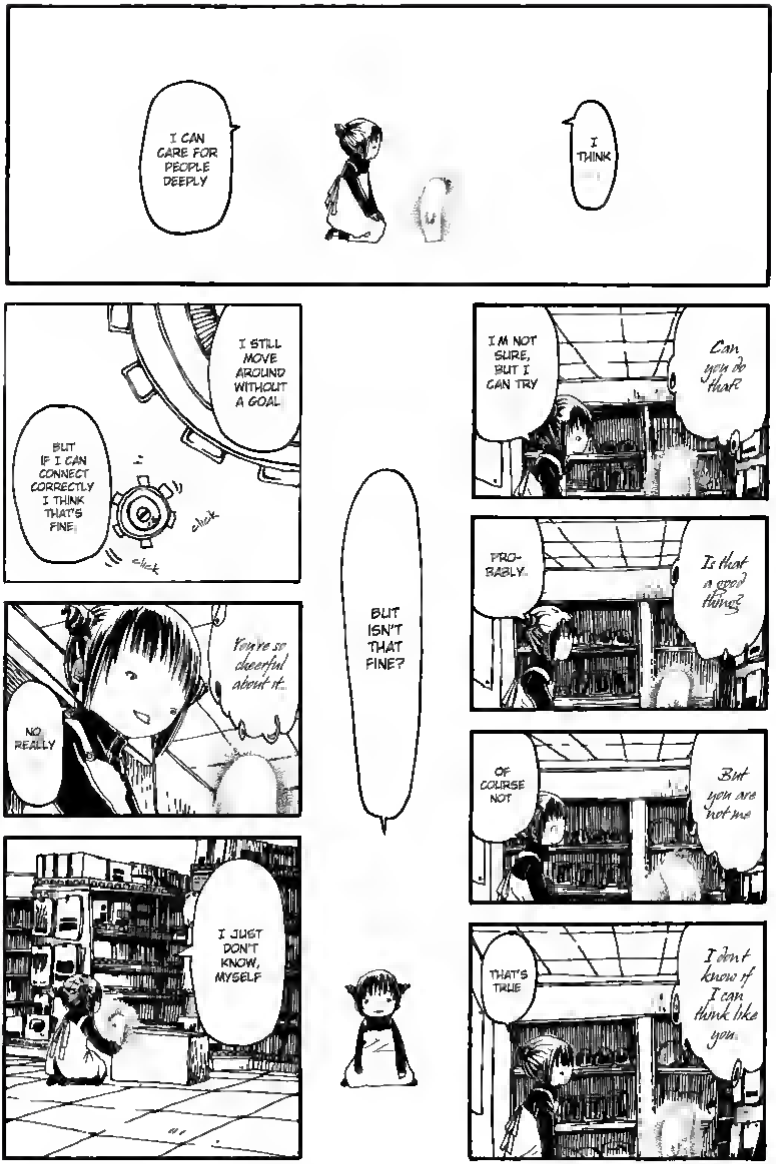
So...
Why am I so bitter...

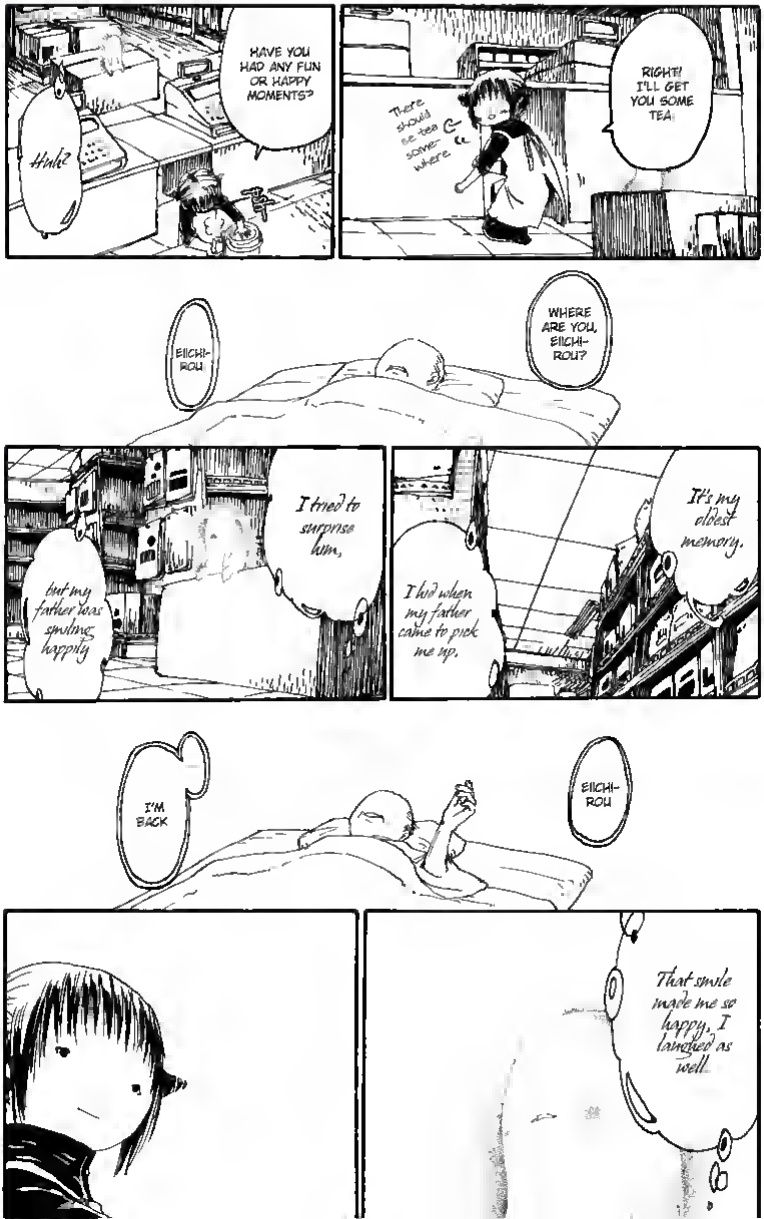

when I was right beside him.
My father ignored me...
so bitter...
I'm bitter,


Bitter.
WHOA!

I'VE NEVER BEEN SO CLOSE TO THE CEILING...
I'm so bitter...
YOU REALLY LOVED YOUR FATHER
SNIF!
I want to disappear, but I can't.
at myself for not coming to terms with him.

I'M...
NOT SCARED OF ANYTHING BUT I DON'T HAVE MUCH FUN, EITHER
I'm so bitter.
BUT I STILL EXIST
I WONDER WHY?
There's been a hole inside of me ever since he died
I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M HERE,
BUT I THINK I FINALLY SEE SOME HOPE


I CAN CARE FOR PEOPLE DEEPLY
I THINK
I STILL MOVE AROUND WITHOUT A GOAL.
BUT IF I CAN CONNECT CORRECTLY I THINK THAT'S FINE.
click
click
You're so cheerful about it.
NO, REALLY
I JUST DON'T KNOW, MYSELF
BUT ISN'T THAT FINE?
I'M NOT SURE, BUT I CAN TRY
Can you do that?
PRO-BABLY.
Is that a good thing?
OF COURSE NOT
But you are not me
THAT'S TRUE
I don't know if I can think like you.


Hmh?
HAVE YOU HAD ANY FUN OR HAPPY MOMENTS?
There should be tea some where
RIGHT! I'LL GET YOU SOME TEA.
EIICHI-ROU
WHERE ARE YOU, EIICHI-ROU?
I tried to surprise him,
but my father was smiling happily
I hid when my father came to pick me up.
It's my oldest memory.
I'M BACK
EIICHI-ROU
That smile made me so happy, I laughed as well.

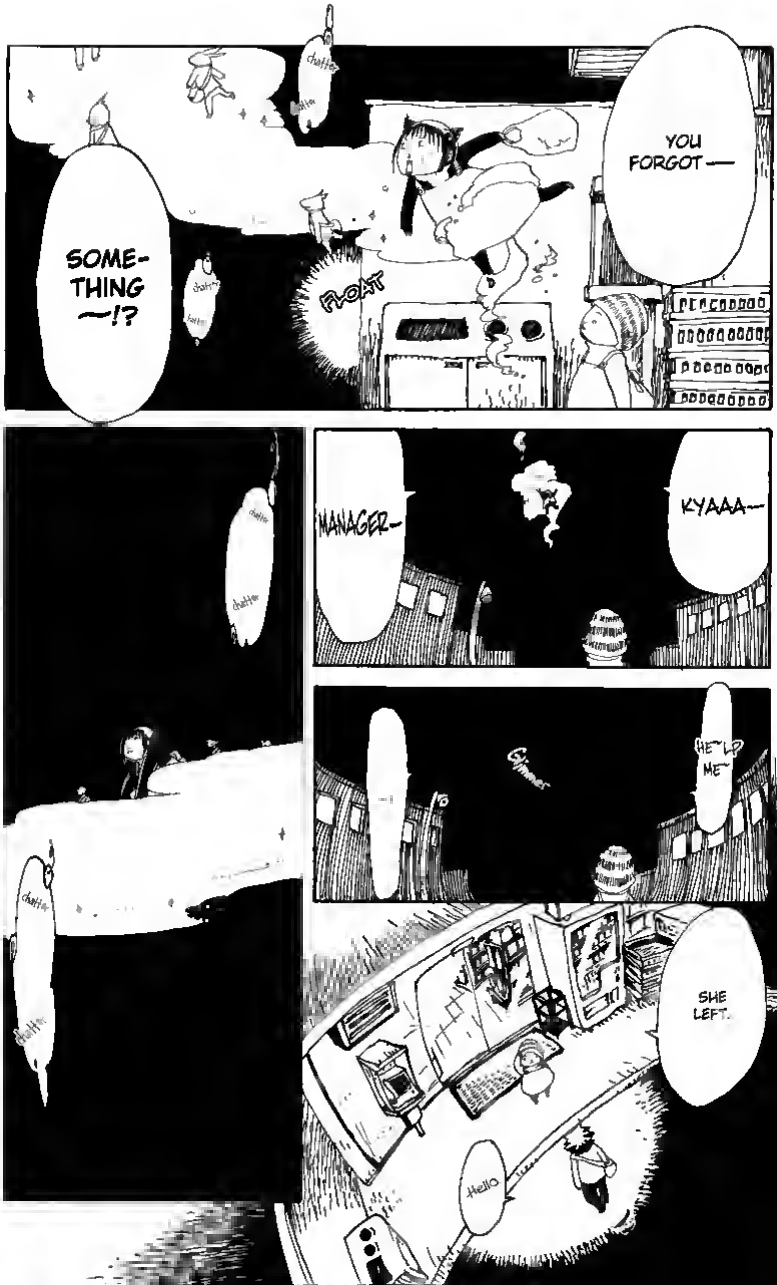
I'll never be able to talk with my father again.
I think I can accept it
THIS CUSTOMER WANTS TO LEAVE HIS MEMORIES
No it's fine
PHEW, NOTHING'S HAPPENED TO YOU?
MANAGER!
I'M BACK
I think you understand yourself a lot more than you think.
But, Miss,
NO NOTHING
DID YOU DO SOME-THING?

Bird

chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter

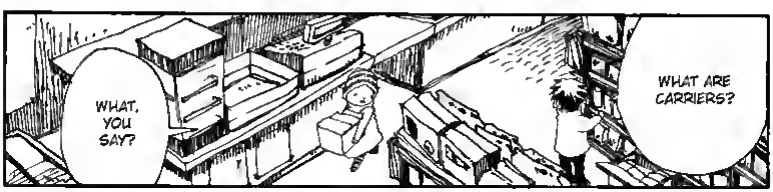
WELCOME,
COME IN—
Chatter
Chatter
Chatter
HOW MYSTERIOUS
SEE YOU LATER~
EH?
SOMETHING'S MISSING?
HUH—?
HOW DO YOU HEAR THEIR VOICES?
WELL, IT'S PRETTY NORMAL.
Please come in.
WHAT IS?

THEY'RE SMALL BUT HARD-WORKING...
GOOD GUYS.
WHY DON'T YOU TAG ALONG WITH THEM?
THEY ECHO DIRECTLY IN YOUR HEAD!
Image
THAT'S SCARY, LIKE LOW-FREQUENCY WAVES...
CAN I?
I DON'T KNOW...
IF GOD ALLOWS IT
DEFINITELY NOT, THEN.
THANK YOU FOR COMING—
W-WAIT!


chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
YOU FORGOT——
SOME-THING ~!?
FLOAT
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
MANAGER-
KYAAA—
Shimmer
HE~LP ME~
SHE LEFT.
Hello

MANAGER, THOSE GUYS...
I'M HAPPY.
IT'S SO PRETTY..
"THOSE GUYS"?
THE CARRIERS, I MEAN.
WHOA.
THE ROAD SPLITS.
It's directions to a lot of people—
scratch
scratch

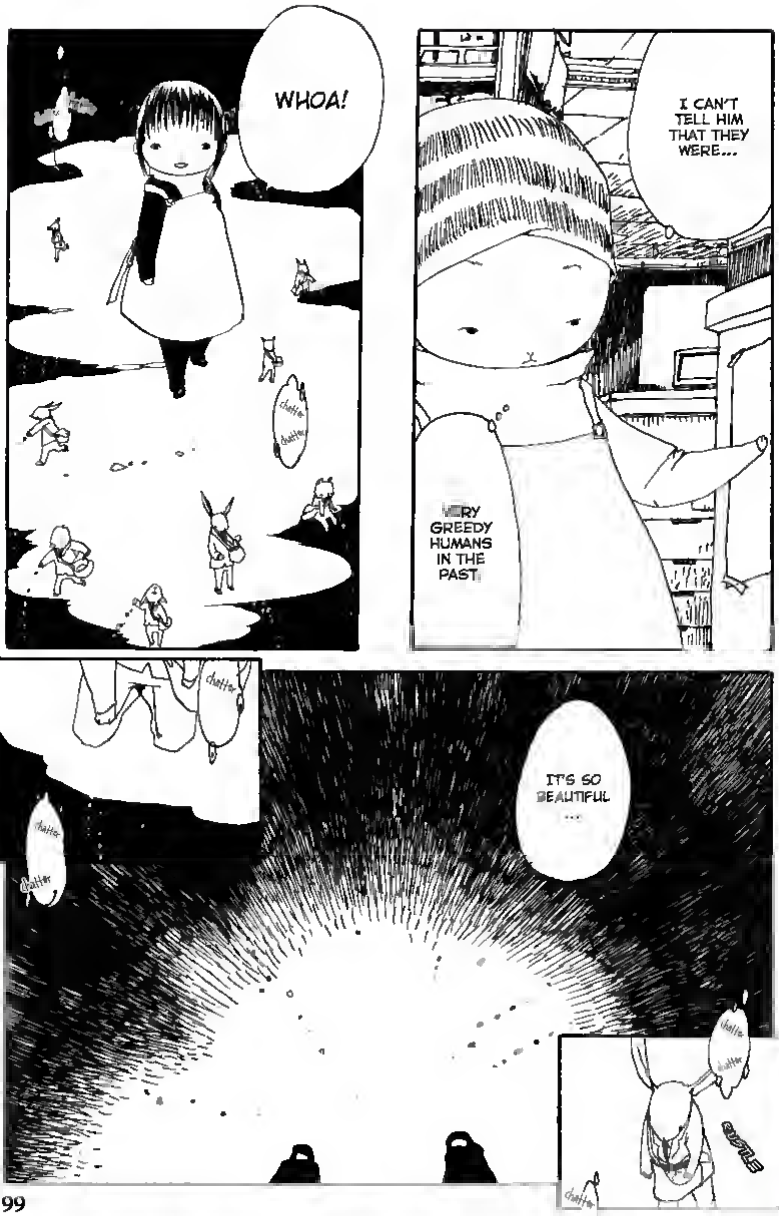
I HEARD A VOICE ...
chatter
chatter


WHAT, YOU SAY?
WHAT ARE CARRIERS?

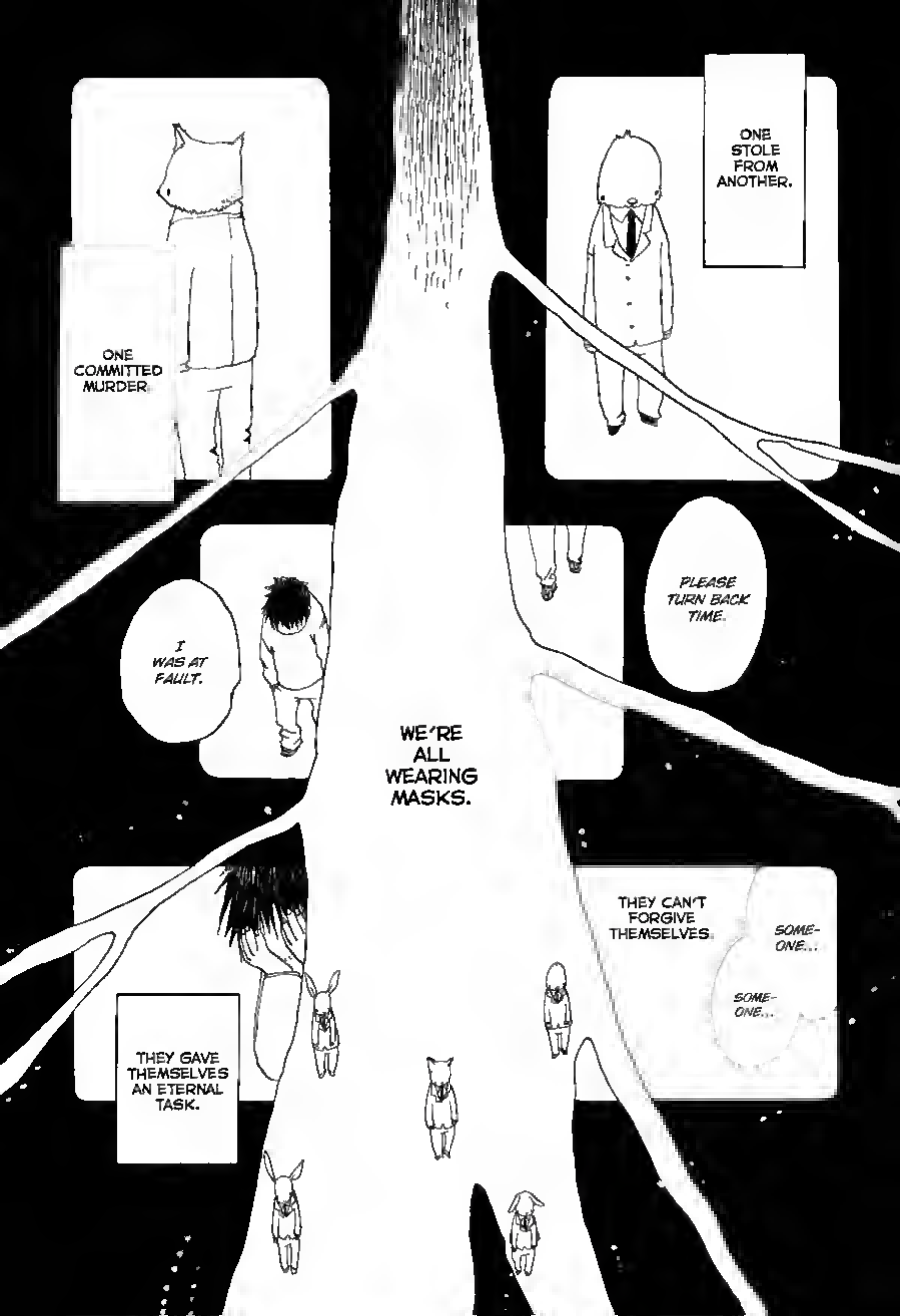
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DID, BUT YOU OFFER TO BECOME CARRIERS
THEY WERE HUMANS...

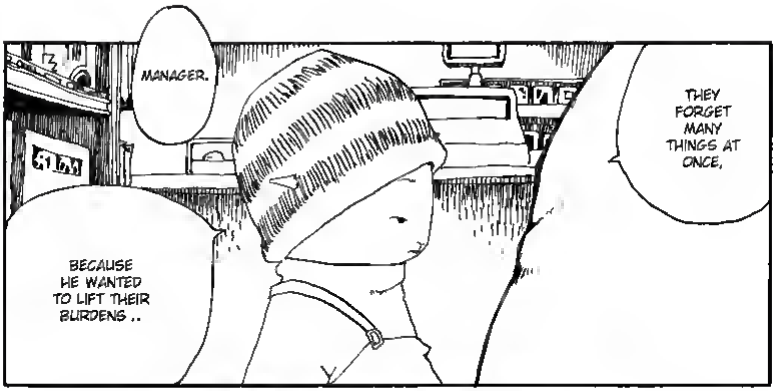
I WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT...
HUH—I WONDER IF THEY HAVE GOOD PAY

? WHEN THEY WERE ALIVE?
WHAT DID THEY DO BEFORE?


WHOA!
chatter
chatter
I CAN'T TELL HIM THAT THEY WERE...
VERY GREEDY HUMANS IN THE PAST.
chatter
chatter
chatter
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL ...
chatter
chatter
chatter
GONE

THEY'RE DELIVERING DREAMS...
Right now I'm having so much fun♪
Yum
It's a good thing,
WHY?
We can't think at length
because we forget quickly
BECAUSE OF THEIR GREED, THEY CAUSED MUCH TROUBLE...
IN THE PAST, THEY COMMITTED CRIMES.

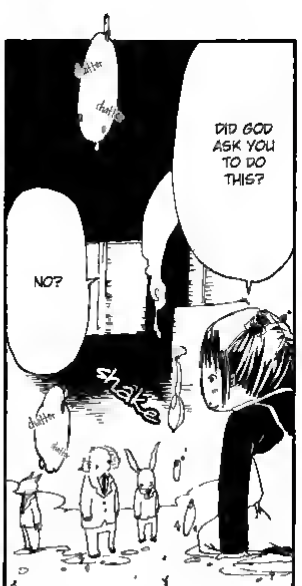

ONE COMMITTED MURDER.
ONE STOLE FROM ANOTHER.
I WAS AT FAULT.
PLEASE TURN BACK TIME.
WE'RE ALL WEARING MASKS.
THEY GAVE THEMSELVES AN ETERNAL TASK.
THEY CAN'T FORGIVE THEMSELVES.
SOME-ONE...
SOME-ONE...

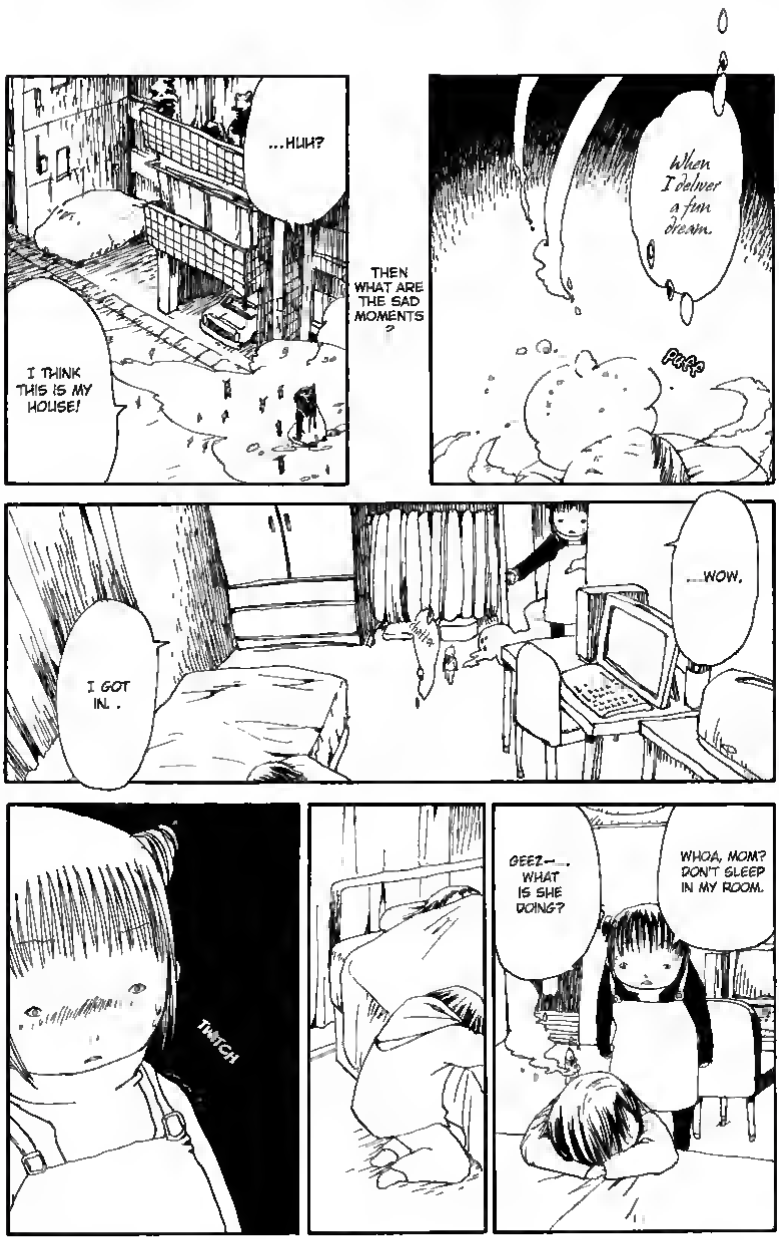

MANAGER.
THEY FORGET MANY THINGS AT ONCE,
BECAUSE HE WANTED TO LIFT THEIR BURDENS ..

KYAA—
This is embarrassing...
BURN
YOU'RE TALKING TO YOURSELF A BIT TOO LOUDLY...

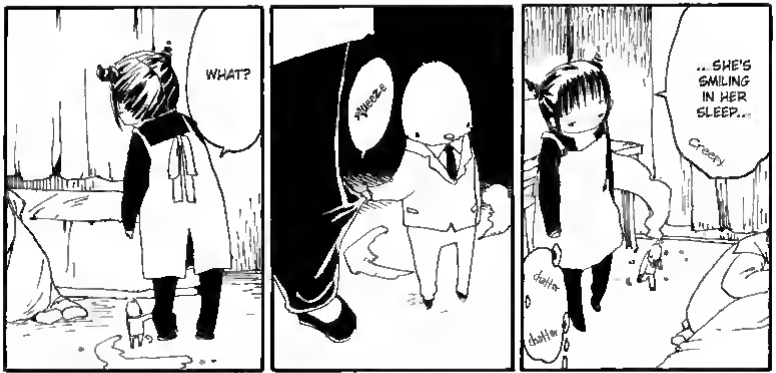
YOU'RE ALL SO TOUGH
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK

WHAT'S THE MOST FUN MOMENT ABOUT DELIVERING DREAMS?

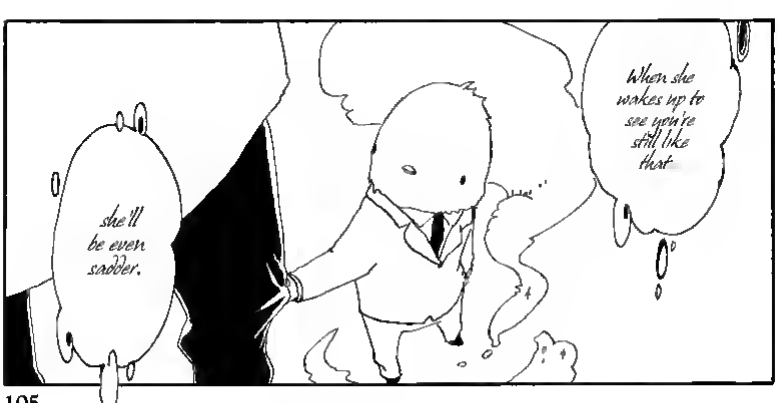

DID GOD ASK YOU TO DO THIS?
NO?
shake


...HUH?
I THINK THIS IS MY HOUSE!
THEN WHAT ARE THE SAD MOMENTS?
When I deliver a fun dream.
Puff
...WOW.
I GOT IN.
TWITCH
GEEZ—. WHAT IS SHE DOING?
WHOA, MOM? DON'T SLEEP IN MY ROOM.

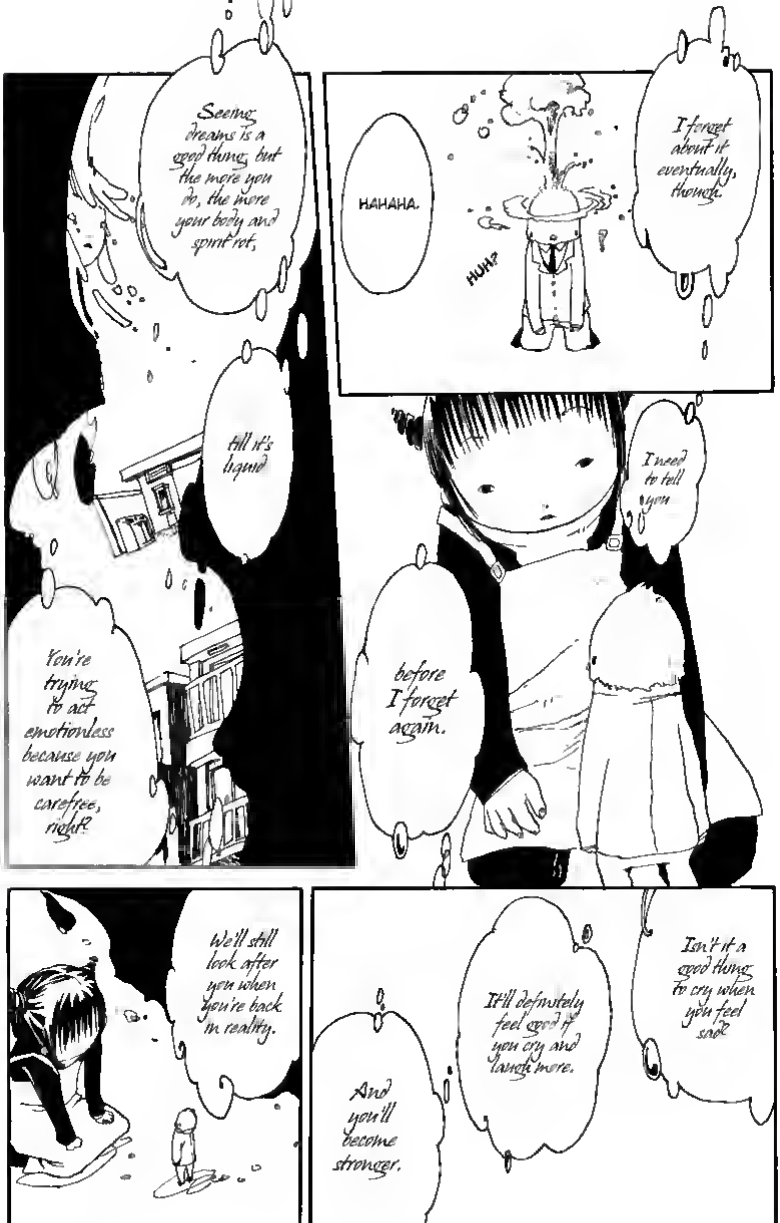
I'M SLEEPING ...
...
M... MOM?
PUFF


WHAT?
squeak
.. SHE'S SMILING IN HER SLEEP...
Creepy
dattn
dattn

You've been sleeping for many months

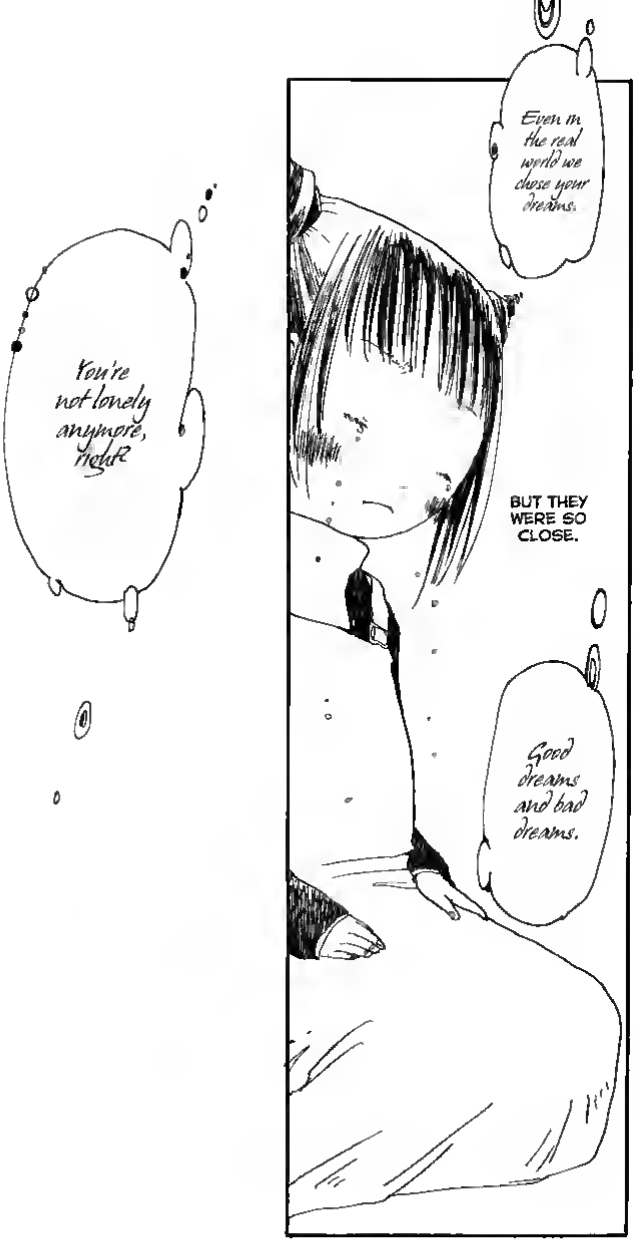

When she wakes up to see you're still like that
she'll be even sadder.

I'M FINE, RIGHT?
BUT I'M JUST SLEEPING.
?
Even though she just got to see you.
When I deliver a sad dream,
I'm sad as well.
But no matter how sad I am, I don't shed any tears
since I'm just a bird.

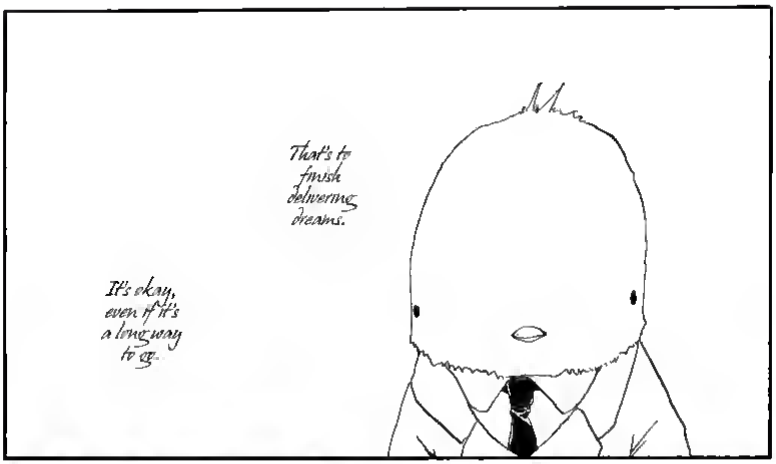

Seeing dreams is a good thing, but the more you do, the more your body and spirit rot.
Till it's liquid
You're trying to act emotionless because you want to be carefree, right?
HAHAHA.
HUH?
I forget about it eventually, though.
I need to tell you
before I forget again.
We'll still look after you when you're back in reality.
Isn't it a good thing to cry when you feel sad?
It'll definitely feel good if you cry and laugh more.
And you'll become stronger.

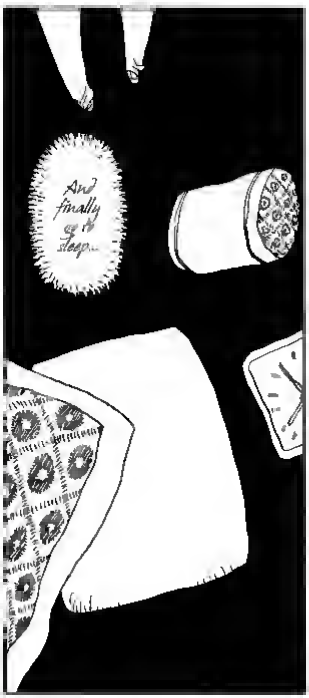
ALWAYS THOUGHT MY FEELINGS WERE IN A DISTANT PLACE.
I...
I COULDN'T LAUGH OR CRY IN THEIR TRUE MEANING.
IT FELT LIKE EVERY-ONE WAS TALKING SO FAR AWAY FROM ME.
SO I THOUGHT MY FEELINGS WERE SEPARATED THAT MUCH FROM ME AS WELL.

MY MOTHER WAS SO CLOSE TO ME, BUT I PRETENDED TO NOT CARE.
I WAS PRETENDING TO BE EMOTIONLESS
IT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU JUST SAID.
I WAS LOOKING FOR MY OWN FEELINGS, AND IGNORED EVERYTHING ELSE
AND YET I THOUGHT YOU WERE FAR AWAY.
We were close to you from the beginning.
I ONLY SAW MYSELF.

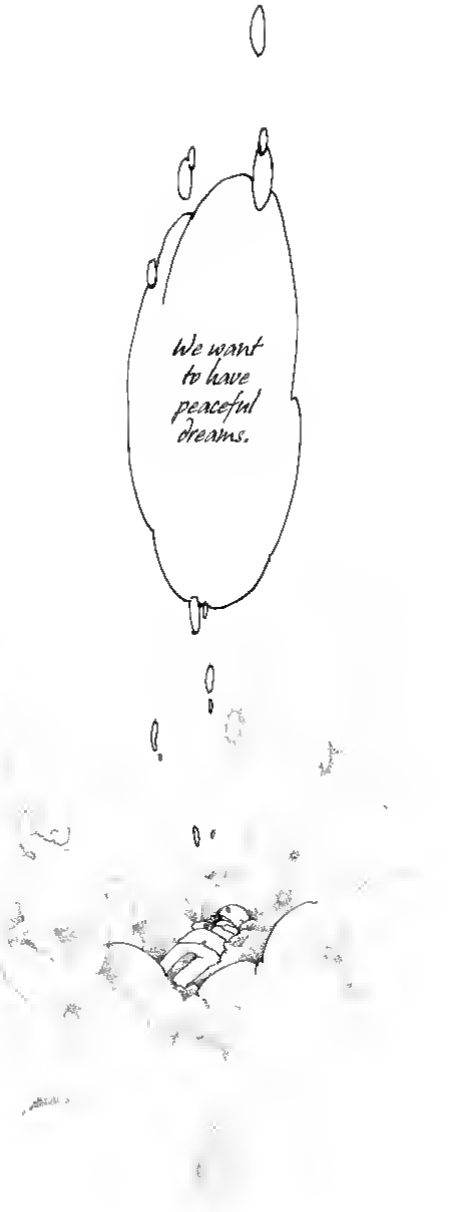

Even in the real world we chose your dreams.
BUT THEY WERE SO CLOSE.
Good dreams and bad dreams.
You're not lonely anymore, right?

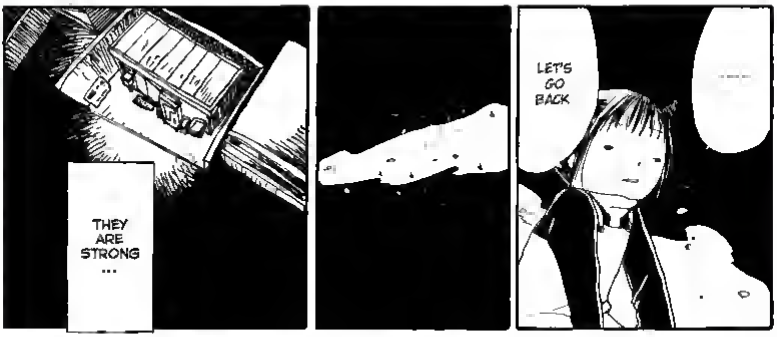
MY FEELINGS WERE SO CLOSE, JUST LIKE THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.

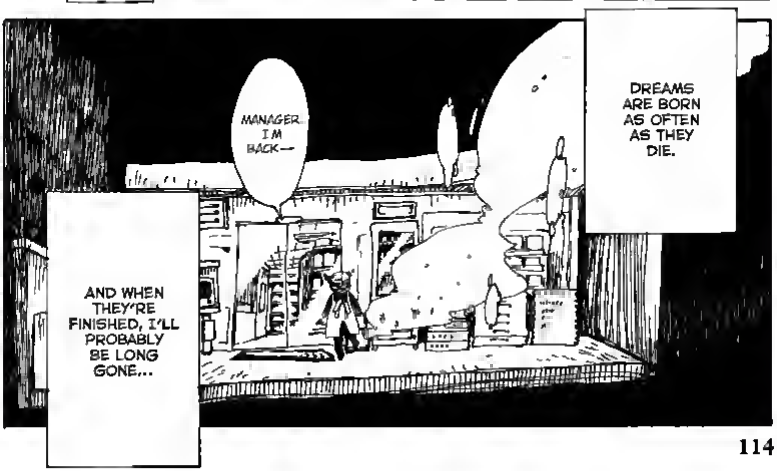

That's to finish delivering dreams.
It's okay, even if it's a long way to go.


And finally go to sleep...

We want to pass out all these dreams.

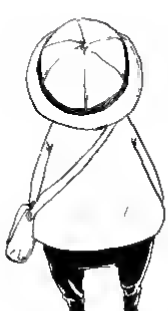

We want
to have
peaceful
dreams.


THEY ARE STRONG ...
LET'S GO BACK
.....


DREAMS ARE BORN AS OFTEN AS THEY DIE.
MANAGER. I'M BACK—
AND WHEN THEY'RE FINISHED, I'LL PROBABLY BE LONG GONE...

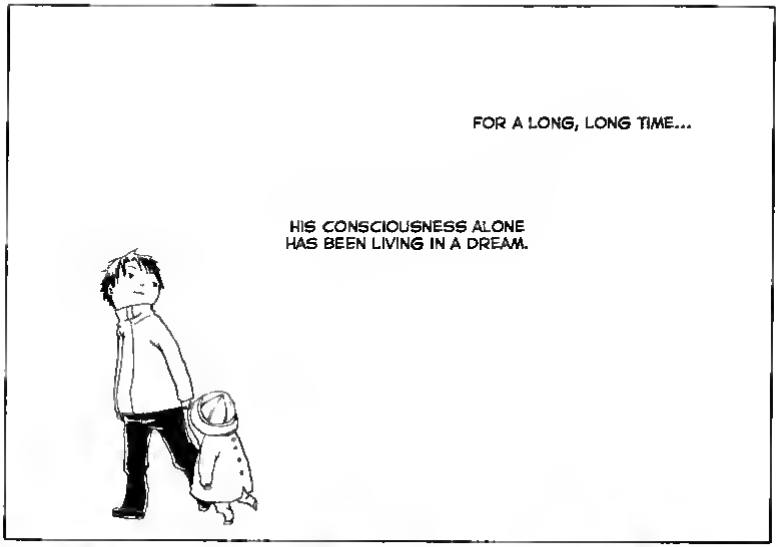
CLOSE YOUR EYES.

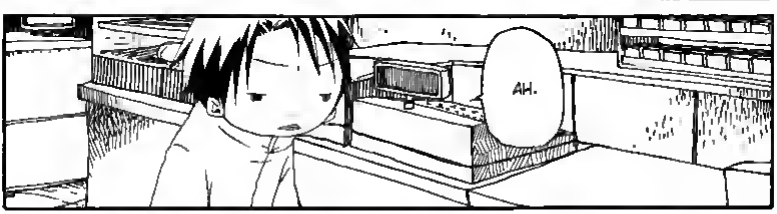
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO TO SLEEP...



Satoru

NAH,
I'M... SORRY
NOTHING TO APOLOGIZE ABOUT!
IS SHE SPACING OUT AGAIN?
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S GOOD IF YOU'RE GOING TO WAKE UP.
I GUESS IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR ME TO BID FAREWELL—
HE WAS IN A COMA AFTER AN ACCIDENT.
HE'S AN OLD FRIEND ...
HIS REAL SELF IS SLEEPING.
I'LL BE SO SAD—
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
WAAAH!


FOR A LONG, LONG TIME...
HIS CONSCIOUSNESS ALONE
HAS BEEN LIVING IN A DREAM.


AH.

YOUR FATHER?
IT FEELS LIKE MY DAD.
I REMEMBER HIM
OH, WHAT IS IT?
I HAVE A BAD FEELING...
Shudder

He is dandy.
VERY PROMINENT SIDEBURNS
YEAH, HE HAD A SIDEBURN LEGEND.
SIDEBURN LEGEND?
IT WAS AMAZING, I SWEAR.
WHEN I WOULDN'T STOP CRYING, HE PULLED ON MY SIDE-BURNS.
Sideburns?
HOW HORRIBLE
Rough
AND WHEN I DID SOMETHING BAD, HE'D RUB MY FACE ONTO HIS FRESHLY-SHAVED SIDEBURNS
THAT'S JUST GROSS
HEY
NO REALLY, HE'S NOT NORMAL AT ALL.
YOU'LL KNOW WHEN YOU SEE HIM
I HEARD THAT HE SWAM WITH HIS SIDE-BURNS
Splash
THAT'S BOGUS

DA...
YO.
...D?
fidget
He isn't dandy.
I'M HERE TO PICK YOU UP.
SERIOUSLY, WHY ARE YOU HERE, DAD?
OF COURSE,
YOU GOT A PROBLEM, PUNK!?
GYAH! IT'S THE REAL THING!
WHY IS THE DANDY FATHER HERE...

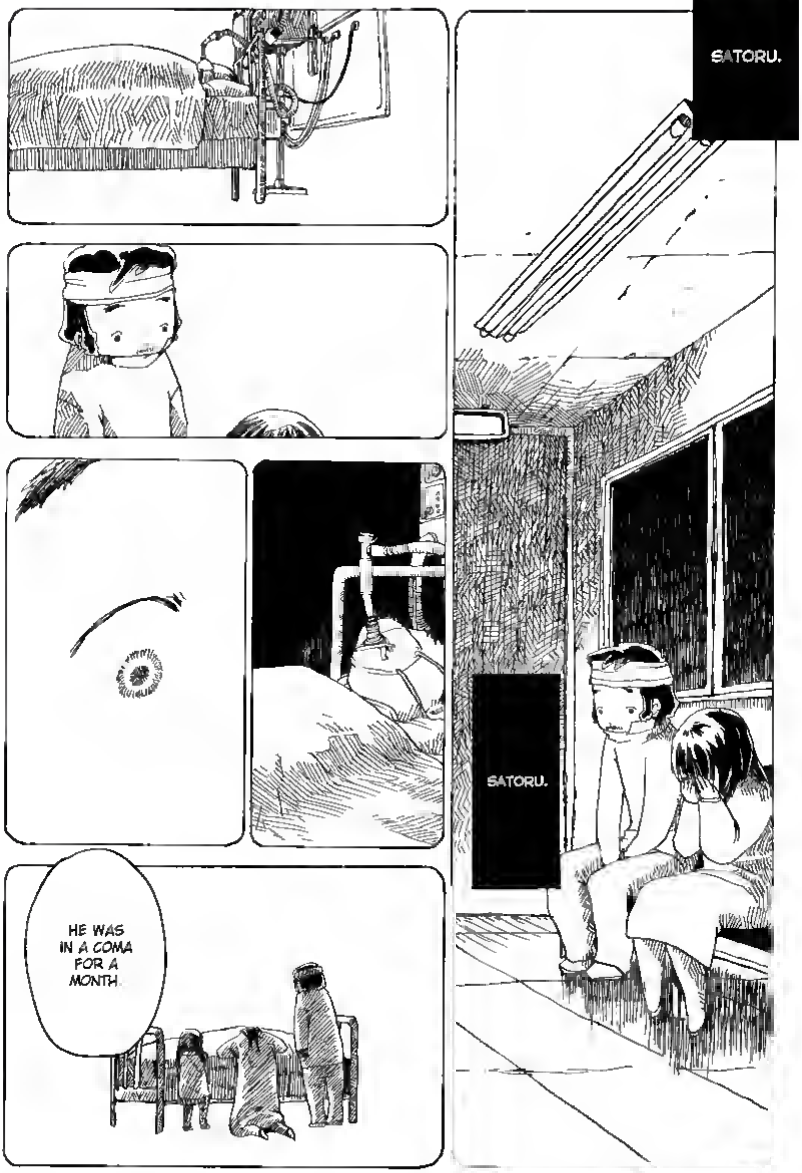
NOT SO LONG AGO I COLLAPSED
I GUESS FROM A HEART ATTACK.
HUH?
SO I CAME TO PICK YOU UP.
DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GOING ALONE.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE YOU DIED, NOW.
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?

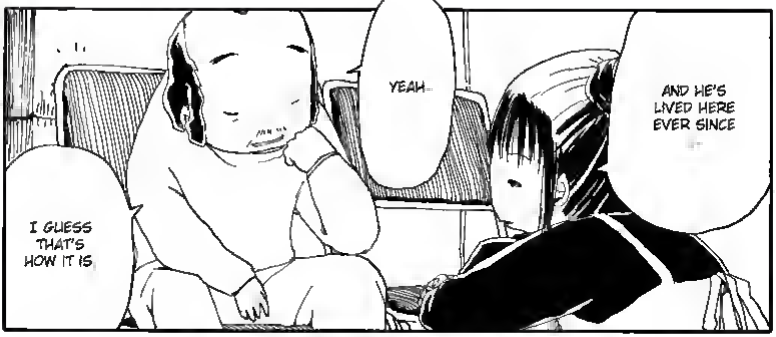
I COLLAPSED TOO, SO I FIGURE IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME.
WELL,
Wha~t?
SO HE WAS ALREADY DEAD..
Trembe...
OH? WHAT A WEIRD ANIMAL OVER THERE
I'M JUST BEAT
SATORU, LET'S GO TO HEAVEN TOGETHER.
LET'S LET HIM REST IN THE BACK
AH...
SLA
What?

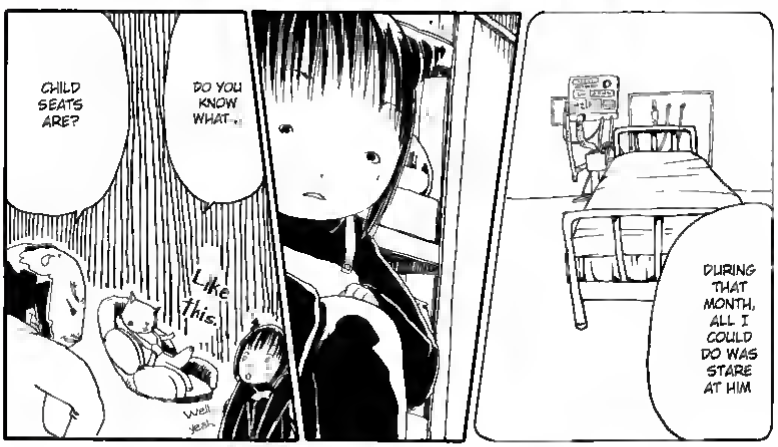
THAT YOU WERE TIRED.
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID...
ARE YOU ALRIGHT, MISTER?
MMM
MISS, YOU FRIENDS WITH SATORU?
Chok
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY SO
TO HAVE FRIENDS HERE.
Bahaha
HE'S A LUCKY GUY...
ALRIGHT, BE SAFE—
Vroom
DEAR,
I'M TAKING SATORU OFF TO KINDER-GARTEN.
kick
HE—Y
Whee
SATORU
Whee

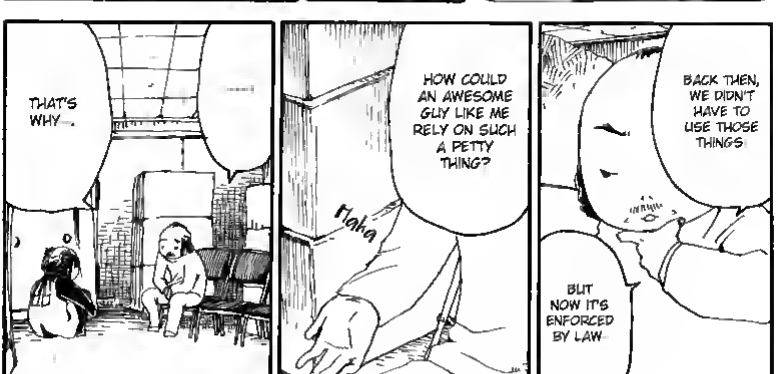
THAT SHITTY OLD MAN.
HEY
DON'T SAY THAT
THEN, POOPY FATHER
YOU REALLY DON'T LEARN DO YOU—?
LOOM...
WAA— LET GO—
HE'S PROBABLY CONCERNED WITH WHAT HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO
CRASH
A LONG TIME AGO?
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT THE ACCIDENT.
IT WAS SO MANY YEARS AGO.
HEY SATORU, DON'T FALL ASLEEP.
MUTTER...

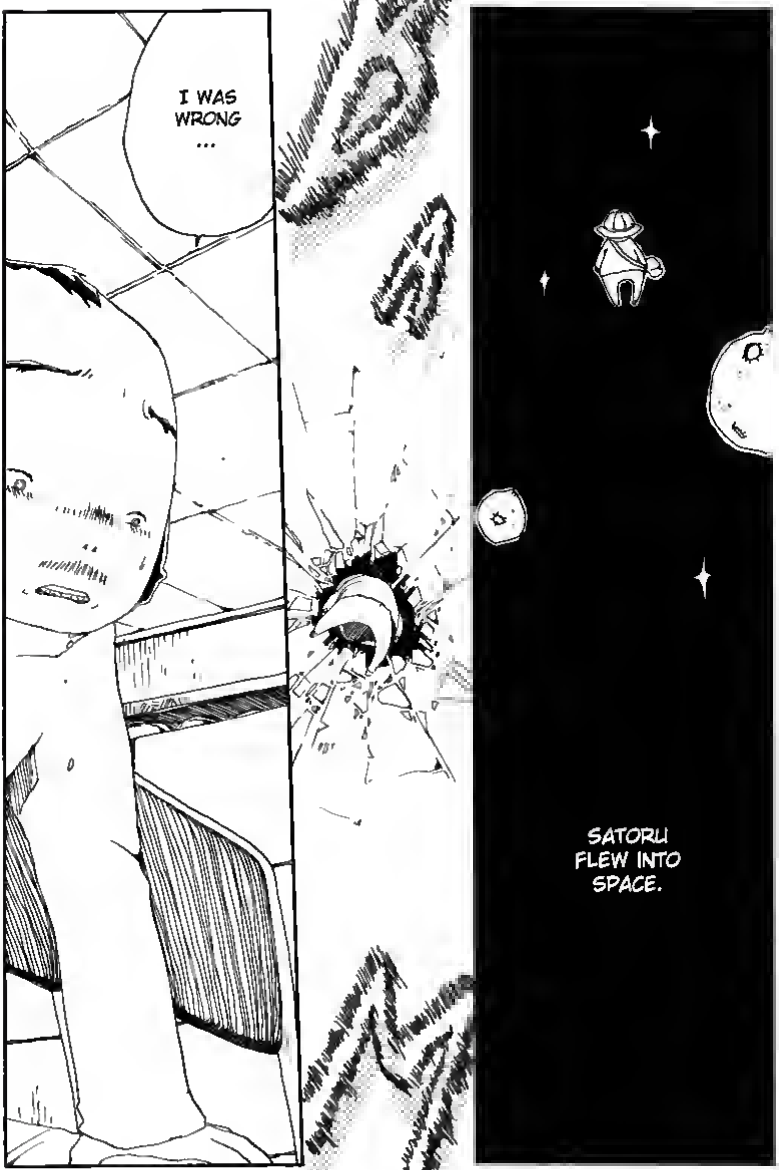
WHOA, THERE—
SUCH A CUTE SLEEPY FACE.
This kid
SWAY
OH.
HWA
SATORU.

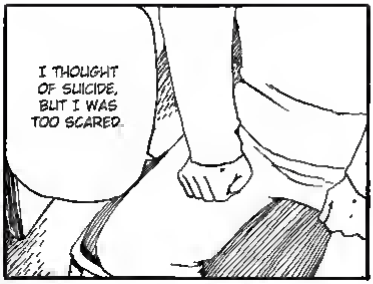

SATORU.
SATORU.
HE WAS IN A COMA FOR A MONTH.

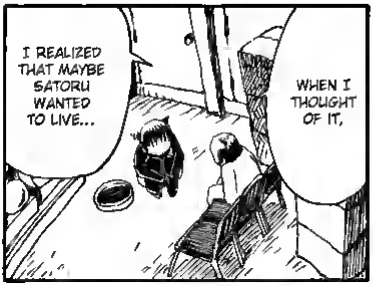

I GUESS THAT'S HOW IT IS
YEAH
AND HE'S LIVED HERE EVER SINCE


CHILD SEATS ARE?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT...
Like this.
Well yeah.
DURING THAT MONTH, ALL I COULD DO WAS STARE AT HIM

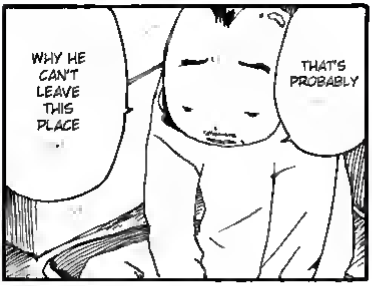

THAT'S WHY...
HOW COULD AN AWESOME GUY LIKE ME RELY ON SUCH A PETTY THING?
Haha
BACK THEN, WE DIDN'T HAVE TO USE THOSE THINGS.
BUT NOW IT'S ENFORCED BY LAW.


I WAS WRONG ...
SATORU FLEW INTO SPACE.


I THOUGHT OF SUICIDE, BUT I WAS TOO SCARED.


I REALIZED THAT MAYBE SATORU WANTED TO LIVE...
WHEN I THOUGHT OF IT,

TEN OR EVEN 100 TIMES MORE THAN I DID.


WHY HE CAN'T LEAVE THIS PLACE.
THAT'S PROBABLY

PEOPLE TELL ME IT'S NOT MY FAULT, BUT SATORU WON'T COME BACK.

...SATORU.
STAMP
SUCKER!
SO YOU WOKE UP.
OHHHHH~
YOU'RE ANNOYING!
DON'T TOUCH ME.
SLAP
OH

EVEN THOUGH MOM AND MY LITTLE SISTER REFERRED TO ME IN THE PAST TENSE.
YOU WERE STILL BLAMING YOURSELF ...!
EVEN AFTER I WENT TO SLEEP.
I REMEMBER NOW. . I WAS LOOKING AT YOU.
I WAS ACTUALLY WATCHING YOU FOR A WHILE,
STOP talking about my head
UGH!
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE BALDING!
I'M GLAD YOU NEVER FORGOT ABOUT ME ...
"I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY..."

I DON'T WANT YOU TO CRY AND WAIT FOR SOMEONE THAT'LL NEVER COME BACK.
BUT...
YOU REMEMBERED ME, IN A CORNER OF YOUR MIND.
AND IT WAS REALLY FUN.
OVER HERE, I MADE MANY FRIENDS AND HELPED OUT AT THIS STORE.
THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO BLAME YOURSELF.

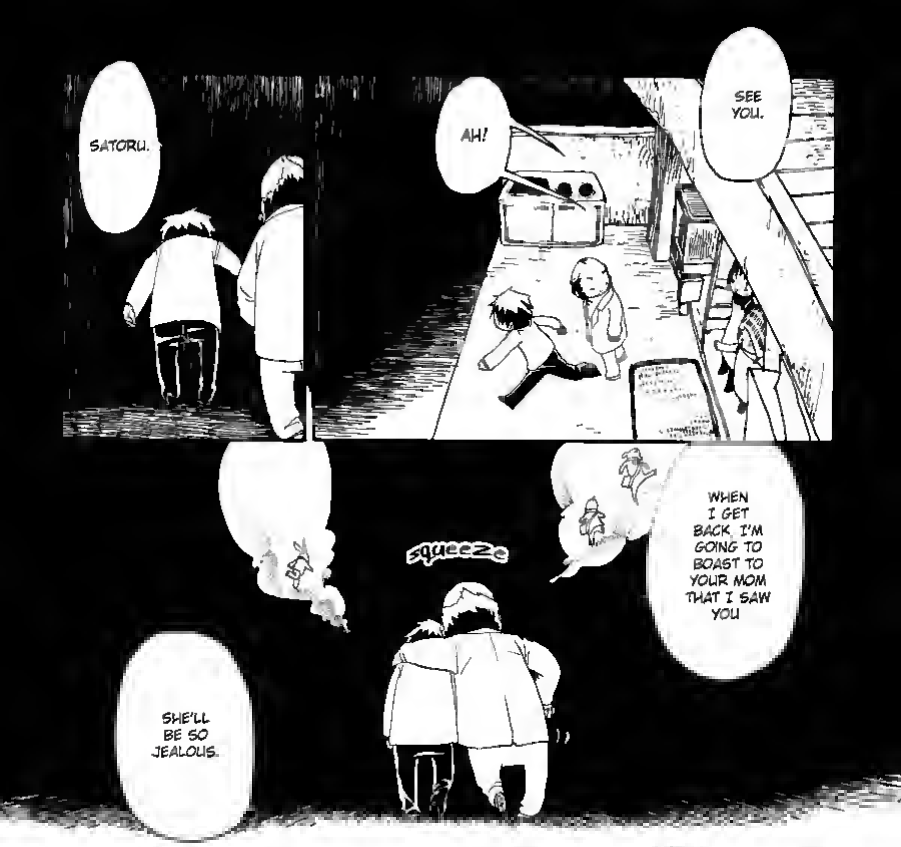
I'M A LUCKY GUY.
I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT TELLING HIM... BUT NOW I GOT TO SAY IT...
HEY, HEY
ARE YOU REALLY SOME ANIMAL?
YES, I AM.
OH NO.
HOW CUTE—
squish
EEK
BAM
Swoosh
THERE'S SOMEONE THAT I CARE FOR DEEPLY
SHE'S WAY STRONG

HEY DAD, YOU MIGHT BE ON THE BRINK OF DEATH,
BUT YOU MIGHT BE ALIVE, RIGHT?
GO BACK TO MOM AND MY SISTER.
.....
WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?
I KNOW, I CAN ASK THE CARRIERS TO LEAD YOU.
ALRIGHT ?
OH, THEY'RE CUTE.
Glow

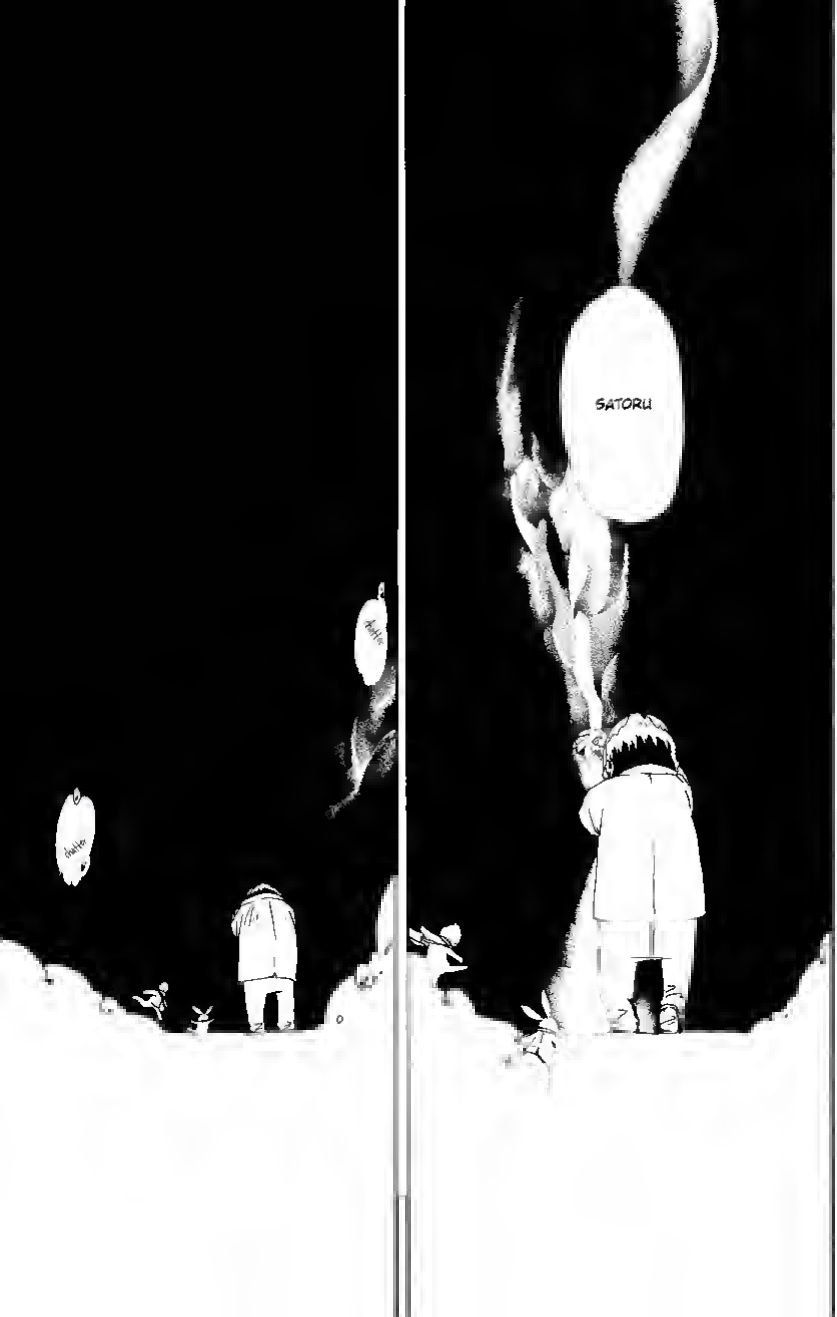
BUT...
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO COME BACK.
MANAGER, I'LL BE GOING SOON
FLING
Rough
YOU CAN'T GO BACK HOME.
I KNOW.
CAN I ASK YOU GUYS A FAVOR?

COULD YOU THINK ABOUT ME..
EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE?
OF COURSE WE WILL.
WHOA!

Bfft!
Nervous.
READY?
THEN LET'S PUT ON OUR BEST SMILES
HUH?
I JUST SAW SOMETHING HORRIFYING...
NO—
HOW RUDE!!
AS LONG AS YOU...
DON'T FORGET ABOUT ME—


SATORU.
AH!
SEE YOU.
squeeze
WHEN I GET BACK, I'M GOING TO BOAST TO YOUR MOM THAT I SAW YOU
SHE'LL BE SO JEALOUS.

WE'RE SO CLOSE.
HEY.


SATORU

.....
...YEAH.
WE'LL SEE HIM AGAIN SOMEDAY

The End

WHETHER IT COMES SLOWLY OR QUICKLY...

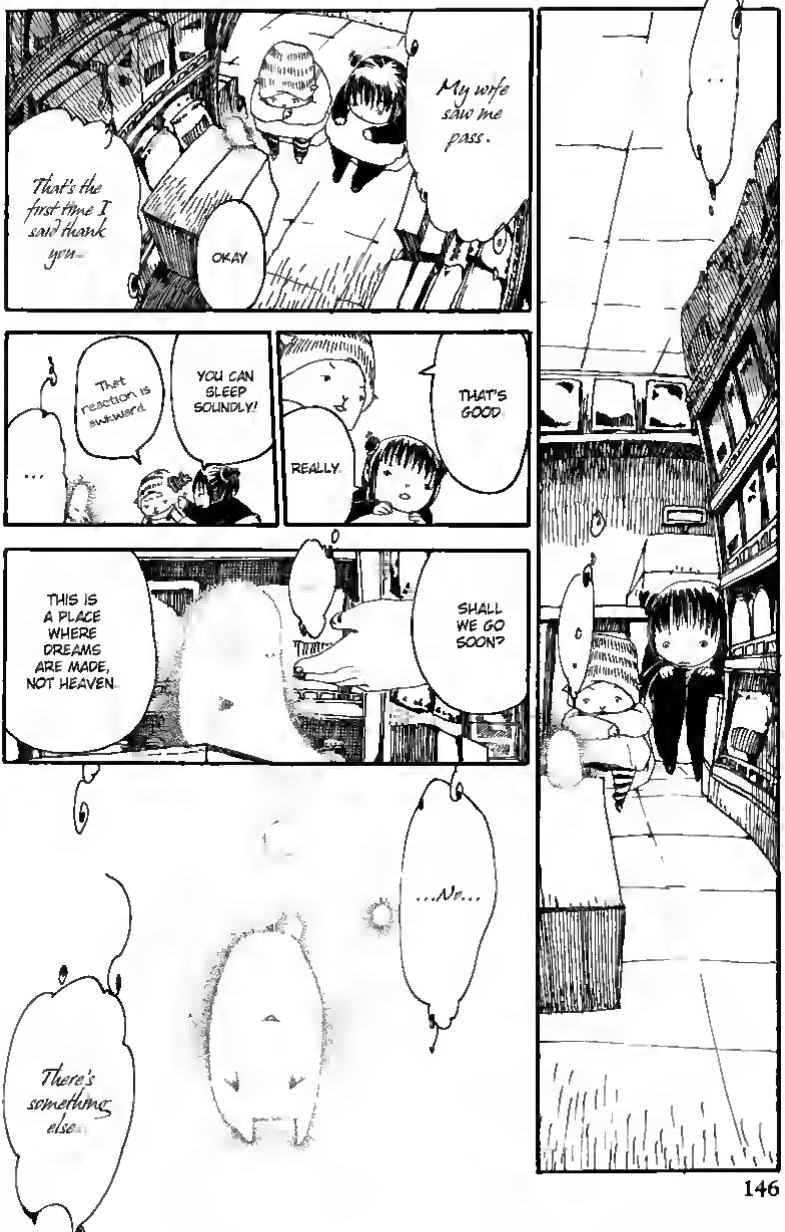
WAS PROBABLY PLANNED OUT FROM THE BEGINNING...

Arooo
A LONG TIME AGO,
THE MANAGER DISAPPEARED AMONG THE WAVES.
SHE'D DESPERATELY CHASED AFTER HER OWNER...
BECAUSE THEIR HAPPINESS TOGETHER WAS GREATER THAN THE SADNESS HE LEFT BEHIND
SHE CHASED HIM UP TO THE RIVER...
WHERE SHE DISAPPEARED IN THE WAVES.

AND THAT VERY MANAGER NOW LIVES IN THIS STORE.
HEY.
WHY...
AM I STILL HERE..?
YES?
STOP CRYING ALREADY!
I COULDN'T EVEN HELP SATORU!
I WANT THE STRENGTH TO TAKE IT ALL IN.
WHY IS IT SO HARD... TO BECOME STRONGER?
A-CK
STOP CRYING SO EASILY!
DO YOU KNOW WHO'S TAKING IT THE HARDEST!?

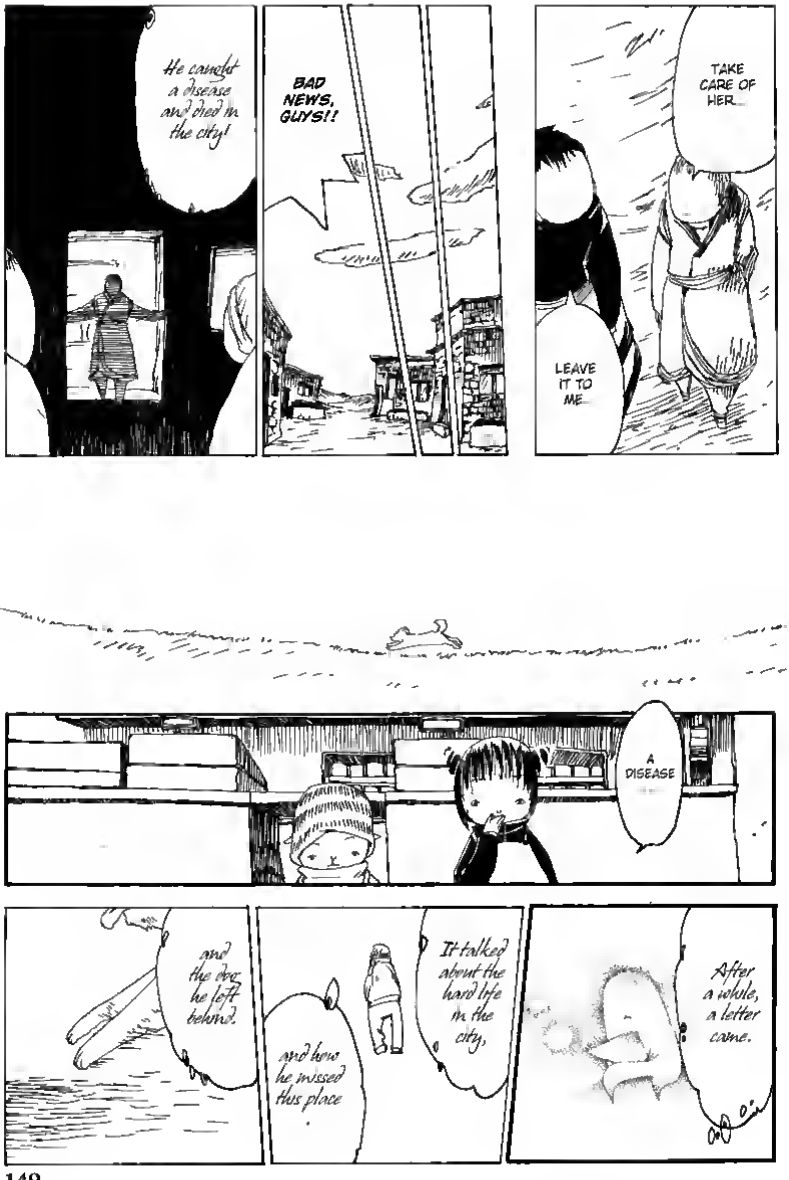
HUH?
munch munch
I'M SORRY... MANAGER...
Rustle
THIS IS FRUSTRATING.
DON'T WORRY, THOSE TEARS ARE IMPORTANT.
IS THIS... STRENGTH? OR IS THIS NORMAL FOR HER?

Where is this?
OH, YOU BROUGHT SOMEONE TODAY?
clatter
clatter
clatter
HAVE A NICE DAY—

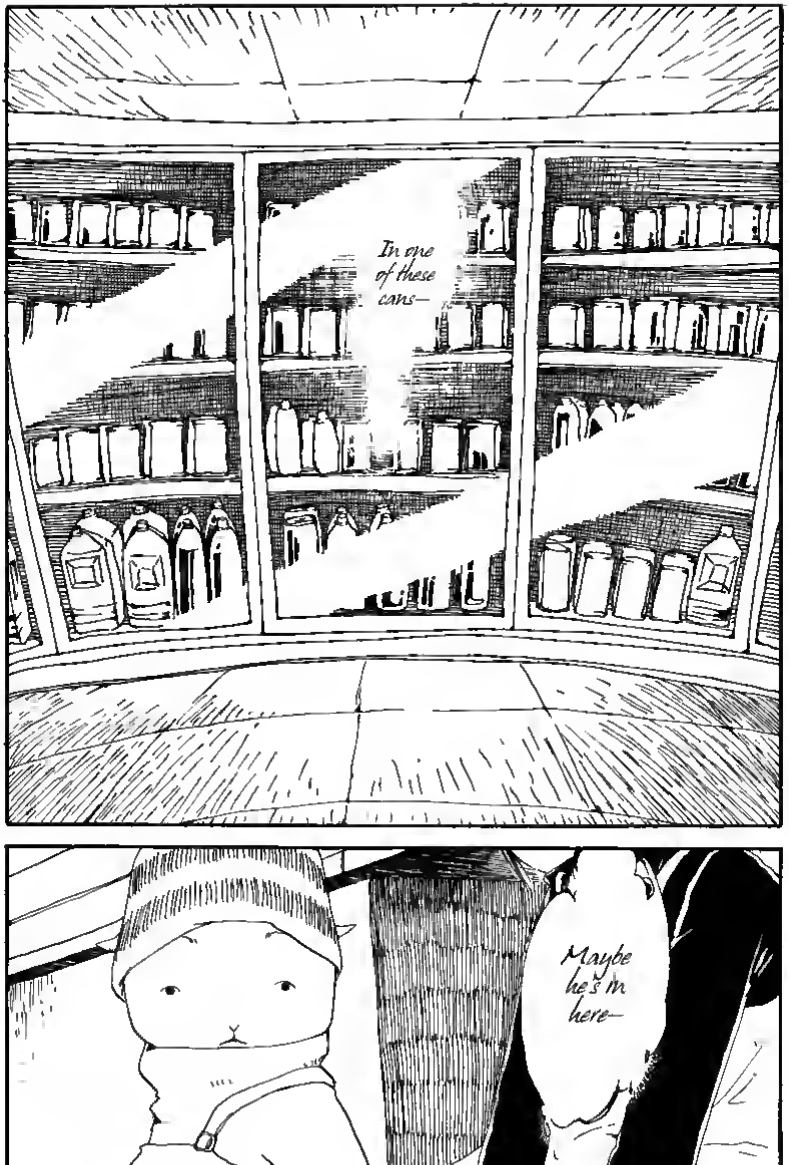

My wife saw me pass.
That's the first time I said thank you...
OKAY
...
That reaction is awkward.
YOU CAN SLEEP SOUNDLY!
THAT'S GOOD.
REALLY.
THIS IS A PLACE WHERE DREAMS ARE MADE, NOT HEAVEN.
SHALL WE GO SOON?
...No...
There's something else...

THE MANAGER LISTENS...
WHAT IS IT?
that I forget to do.
H—M, WONDER WHAT IT IS, THEN.
Well that's bad in itself, but that's not it.
LIKE YOU WERE HOLDING IN A BIG FART BEFORE YOU DIED?
AND ENDS UP HURTING HERSELF ...
EVEN THOUGH SHE KNOWS THAT SHE CAN'T DO ANYTHING,
Will you listen to my story?
—I remember now—

I forced a friend to make a hard decision.
THERE'S A LOT OF JOBS IN THE CITY.
SO THERE SHOULD BE JOBS THAT WILL TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS
YOU SHOULD GO TO THE CITY.
IF YOU DWELL ON YOUR MOTHER'S DEATH, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO ANYWHERE.
I was the one who said it first...
PLUS YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH MONEY, RIGHT?
LEAVE THE DOG... SHE'D MAKE YOU REMEMBER AND GRIEVE.
THEN WHEN I'VE CALMED DOWN, I'LL COME GET HER.


He caught a disease and died in the city!
BAD NEWS, GUYS!!
TAKE CARE OF HER...
LEAVE IT TO ME...
A DISEASE
and the dog he left behind.
and how he missed this place.
It talked about the hard life in the city,
After a while, a letter came.

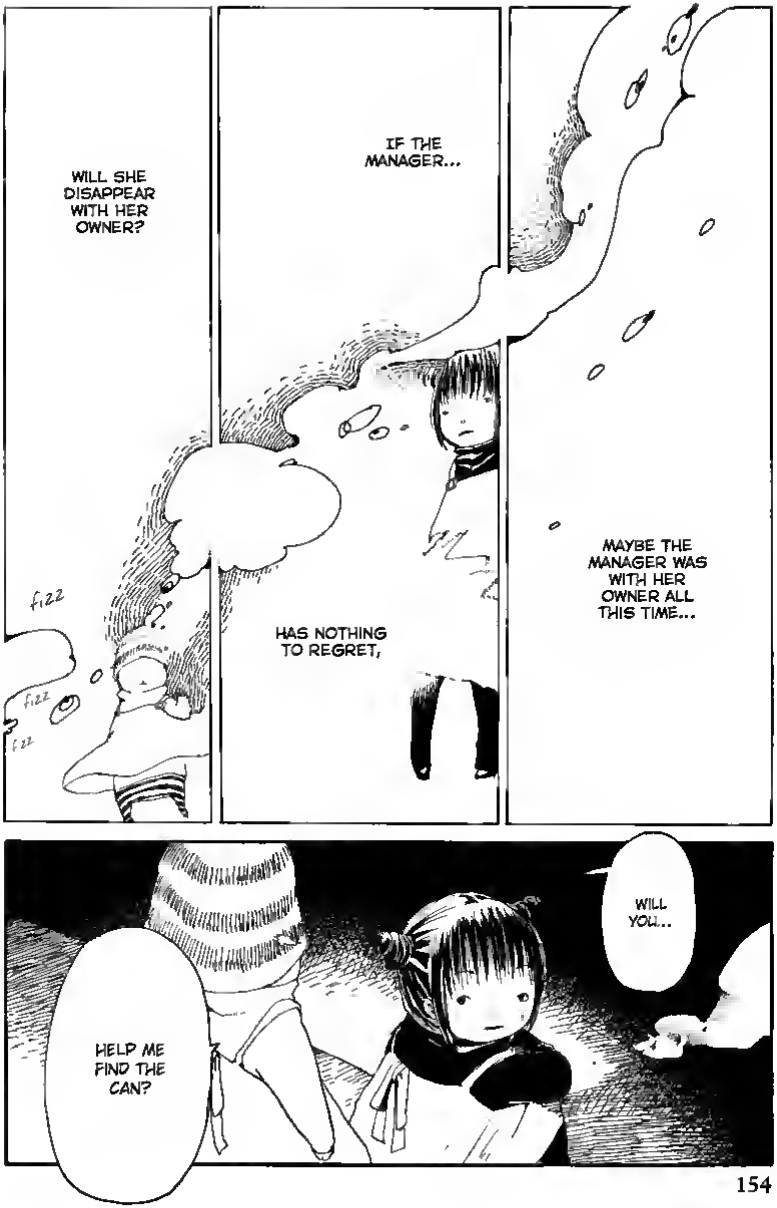
I couldn't do anything.
My friend never came back...
The dog disappeared...
He said he was sorry about not picking up his dog...
THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO BLAME YOURSELF
JUST FORGET ABOUT IT.
THINGS LIKE THAT HAPPEN.
So maybe he...
came here to leave his memories, too.
I want to see him once more. I heard this was a land where dreams are made.
It was his will.

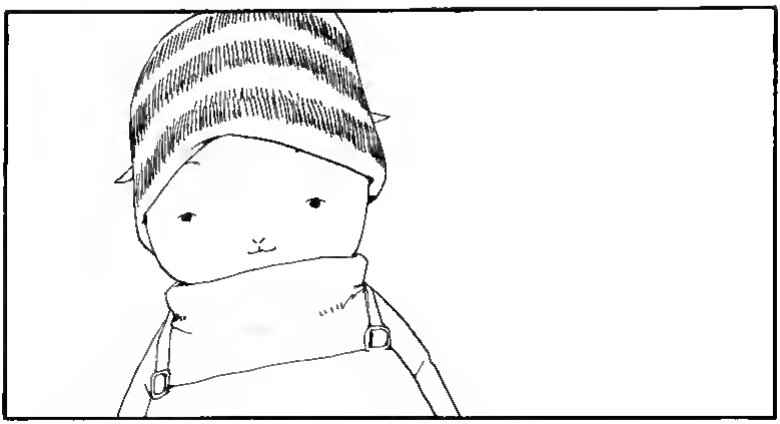

In one of these cans—
Maybe he's in here—

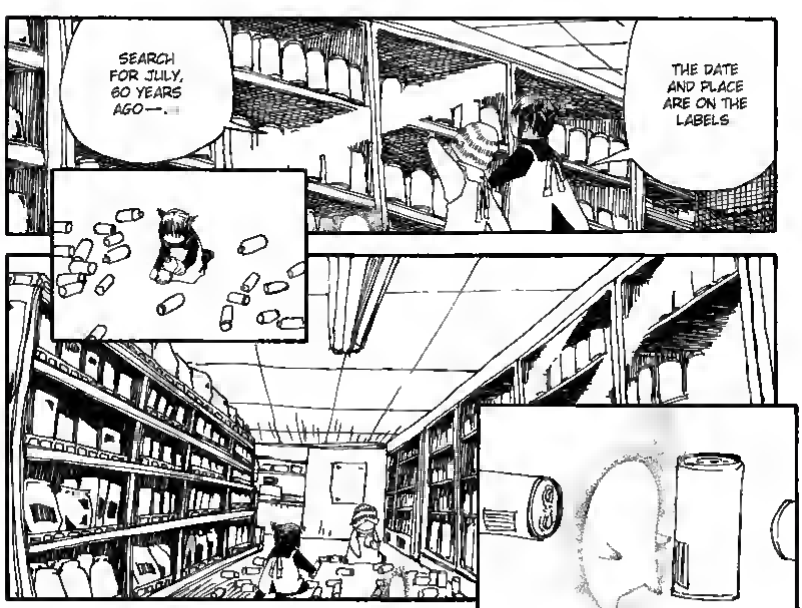
MANAGER!!
He must've had memories he left behind.
I want to find them, somehow.

PLEASE GIVE ME SOME TIME TO THINK ...

chatter
chatter
chatter


WILL SHE DISAPPEAR WITH HER OWNER?
IF THE MANAGER...
MAYBE THE MANAGER WAS WITH HER OWNER ALL THIS TIME...
fizz
fizz
fizz
HAS NOTHING TO REGRET,
WILL YOU...
HELP ME FIND THE CAN?

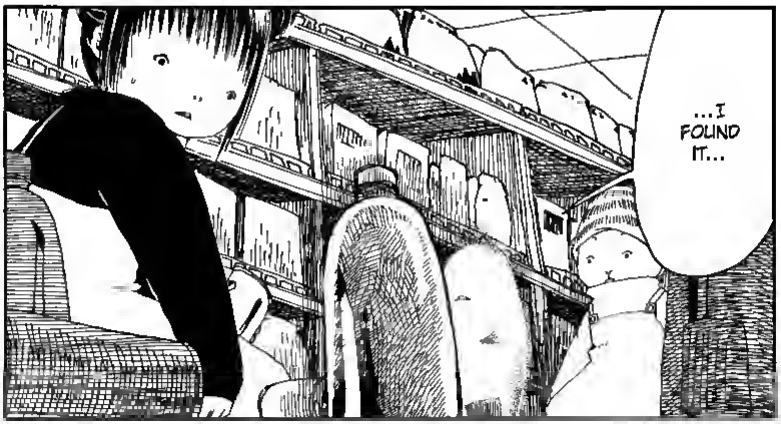



SEARCH FOR JULY, 60 YEARS AGO—.
THE DATE AND PLACE ARE ON THE LABELS

PLEASE DON'T GO.
I KNOW I'M BEING SELFISH, BUT IF YOU LEAVE...
HM?
MANAGER.
THANK YOU.
YOU'RE VERY DEAR TO ME, TOO.
I WON'T STOP CRYING.
YOU'RE IMPORTANT
.....
YOUR FAMILY THINKS THE SAME AS ME,
AND MAYBE THEY'RE CRYING NOW.

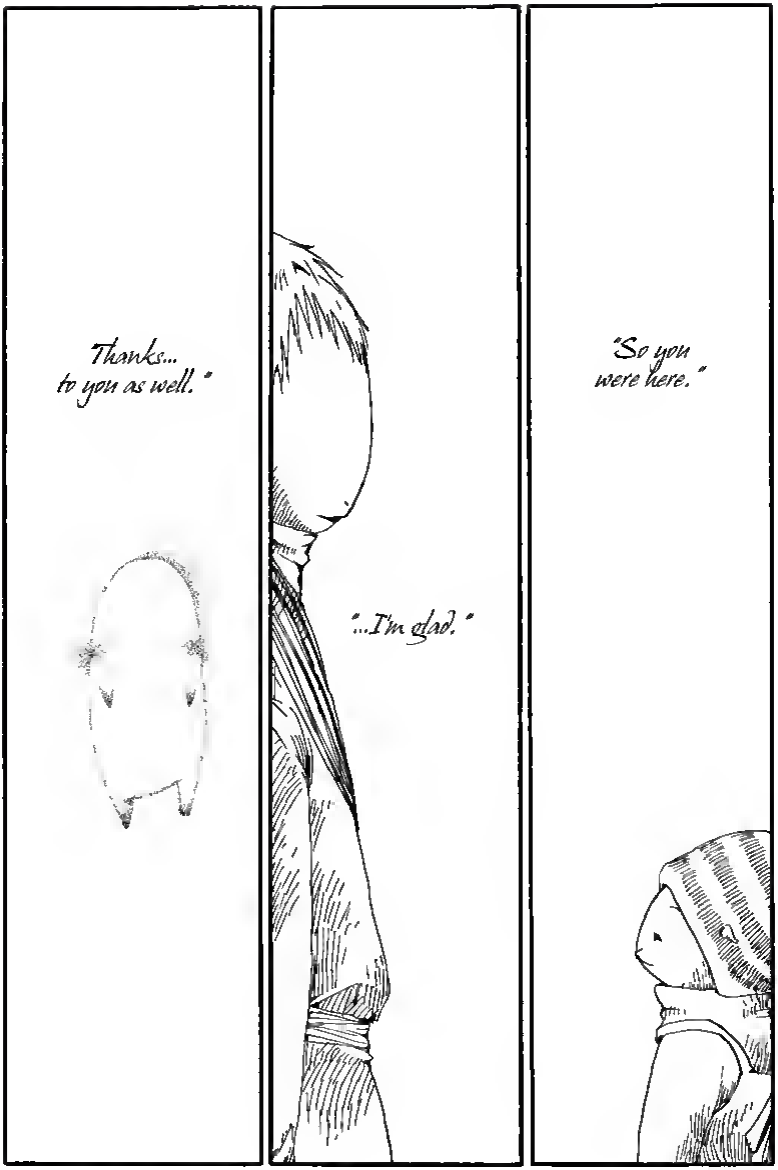
WHEN WE'RE DONE SEARCHING...
WE NEED TO WAKE UP FROM OUR DREAMS

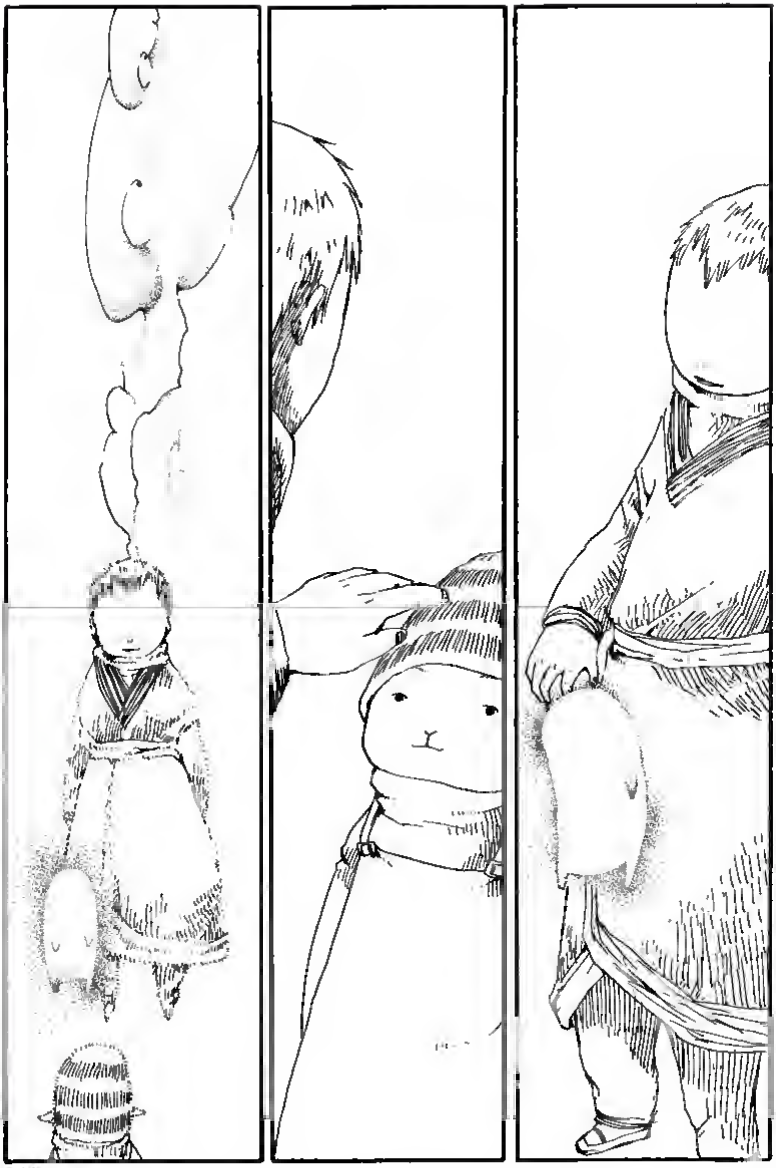
AH.


...I FOUND IT...

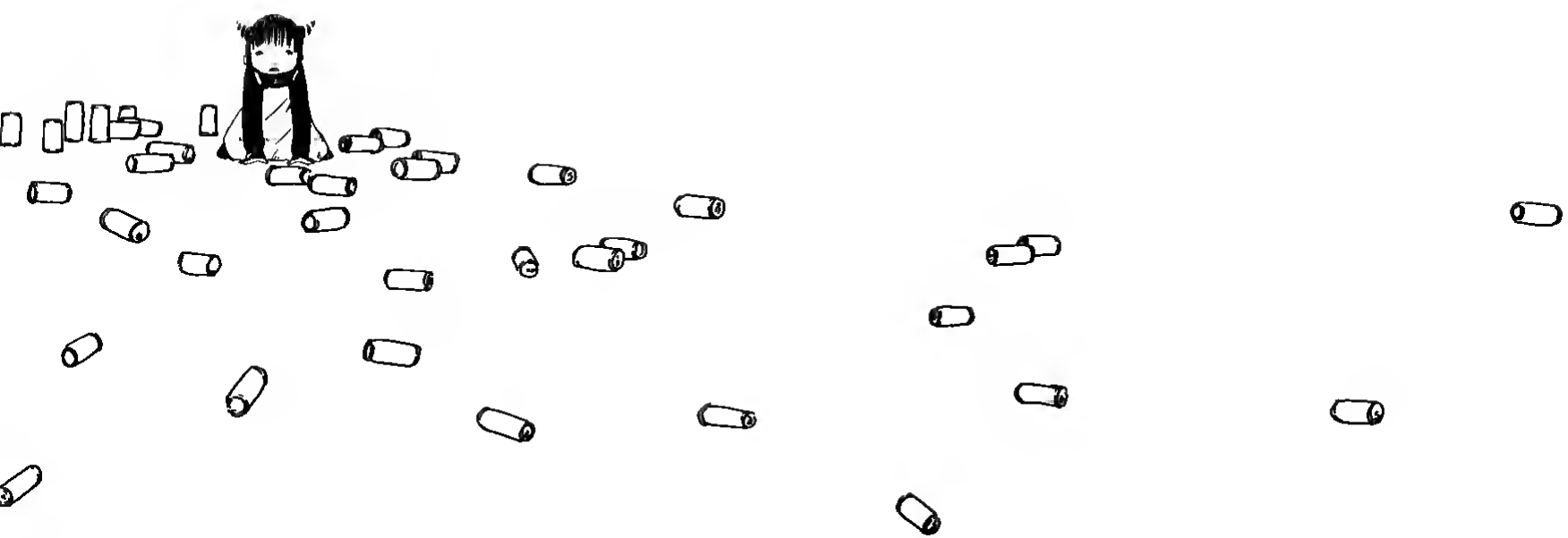
...I DON'T WANT THIS, BUT...
IF THE MANAGER'S GONE,
WHO'LL REMEMBER HER...?
I NEED TO SEE HER OFF.

I NEED TO SEE THIS DREAM OFF,
UNTIL THE VERY END—


"So you were here."
"...I'm glad."
"Thanks... to you as well."

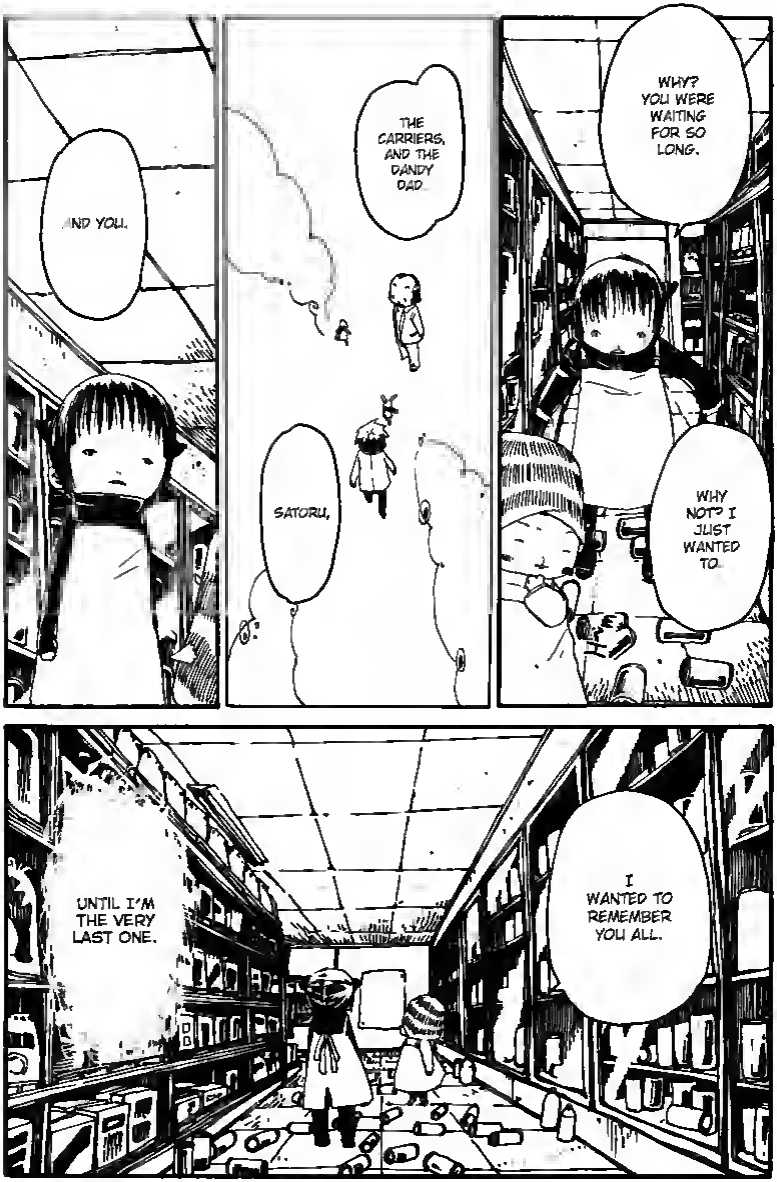


Goodbye...

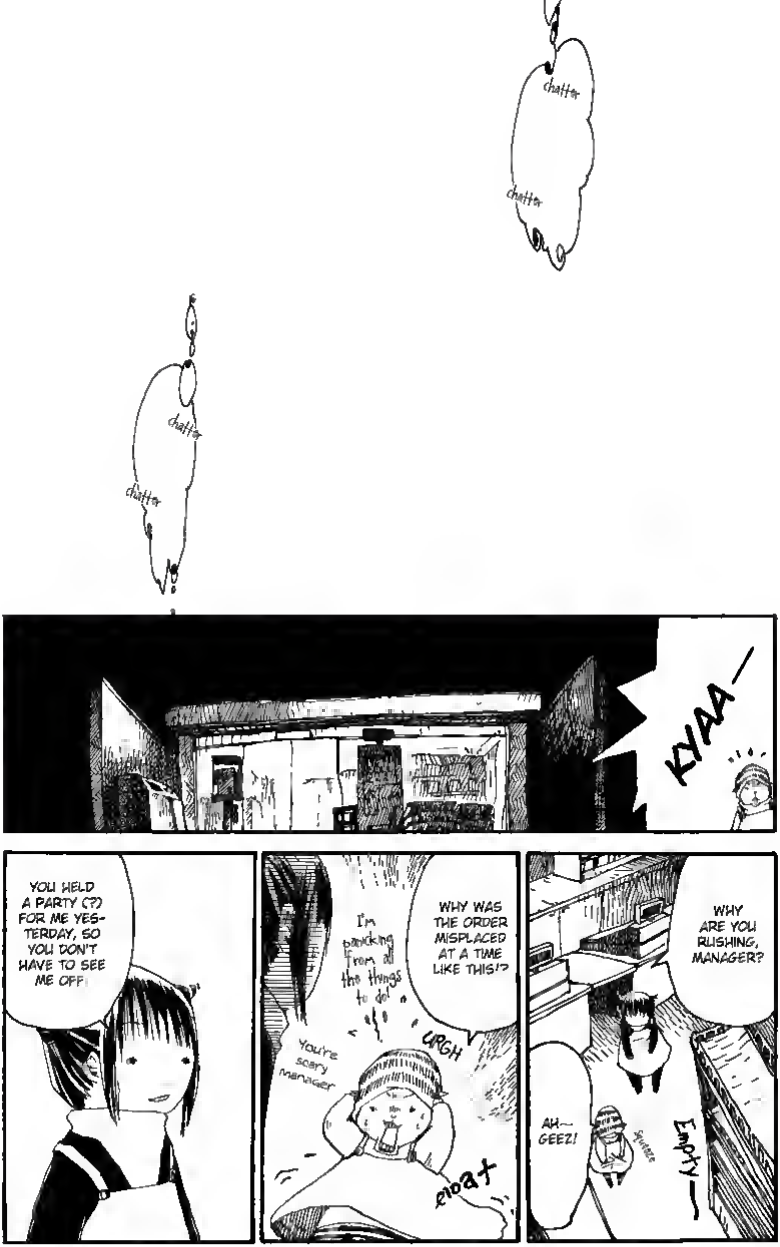


SHE WENT...
MANAGER
...HUH?

THEY BOTH WENT.
WHAT? WHAT!?
WHAT?
MANAGER!?
MANAGER!!
WAIT!
SEE YOU LATER—
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GO WITH HIM?
YEAH.
I DECIDED TO STAY.

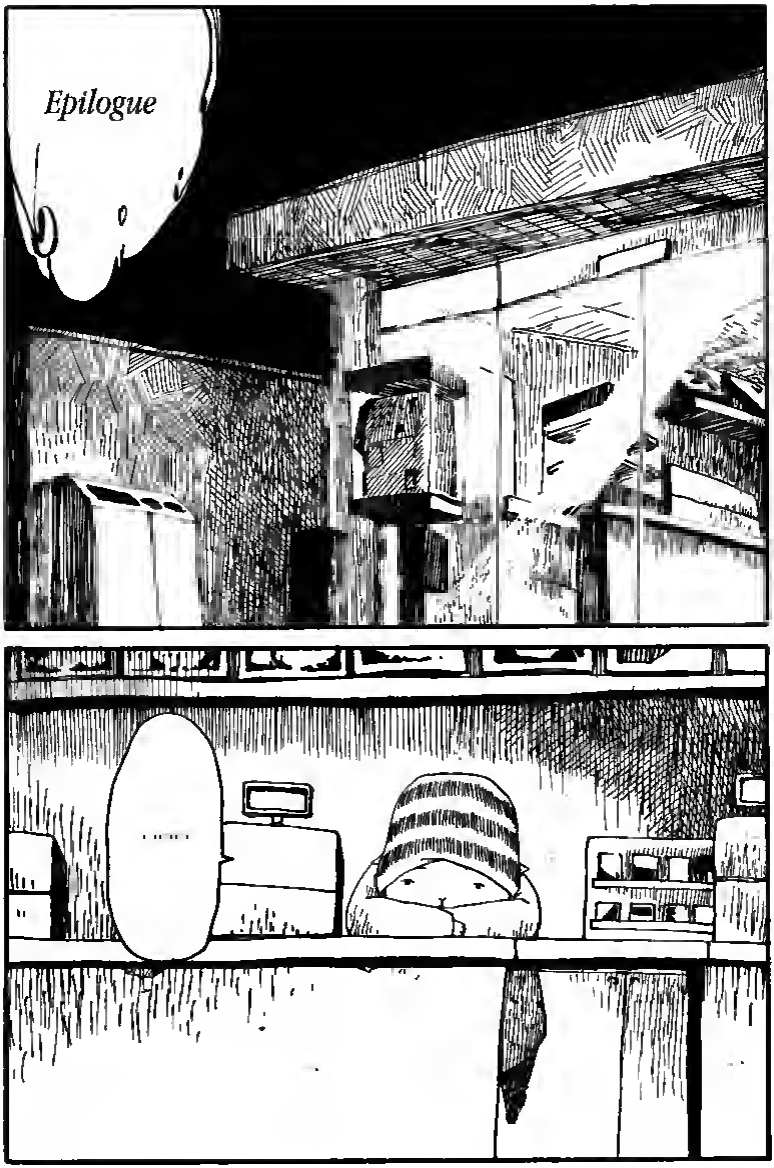

WHY? YOU WERE WAITING FOR SO LONG.
WHY NOT? I JUST WANTED TO.
THE CARRIERS, AND THE DANDY DAD.
SATORU,
AND YOU.
I WANTED TO REMEMBER YOU ALL.
UNTIL I'M THE VERY LAST ONE.

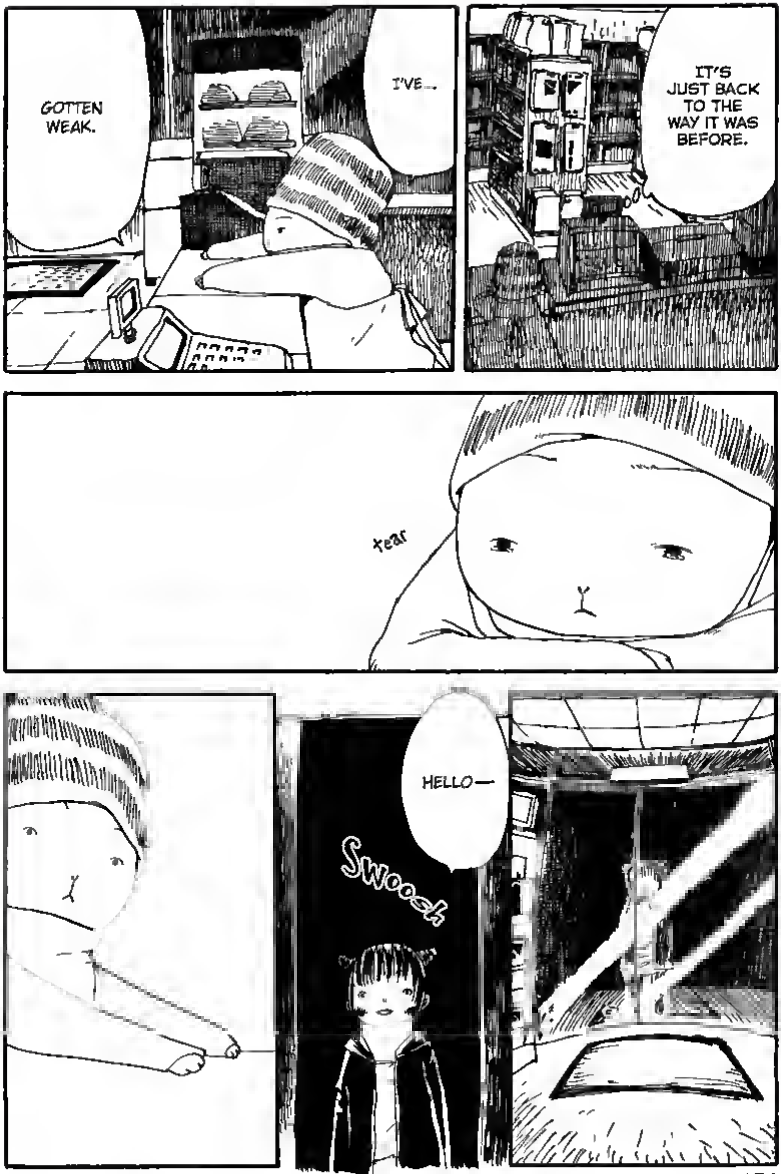
LET'S GET CLEANING, SHALL WE?
WELL THEN.


chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
KYAA—
YOU HELD A PARTY (?) FOR ME YESTERDAY, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEE ME OFF!
I'm packing from all the things to do!
WHY WAS THE ORDER MISPLACED AT A TIME LIKE THIS!?
URGH
You're scary manager
WHY ARE YOU RUSHING, MANAGER?
AH— GEEZ!
Shudder
Empty—

BE CAREFUL.
AH NO!
Tear
PLEASE TELL ME THE WAY BACK
DON'T WORRY
COME BACK IF YOU GET LOST.
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO WAKE UP.
I'LL CRY A BIT.
WHEEEAAA
I GUESS
NO CAN DO.
TCH
Hand it over.
I WISH I COULD BRING IT ALONG.
OH! HERE'S YOUR APRON
OH MY,
I FORGOT ABOUT IT.

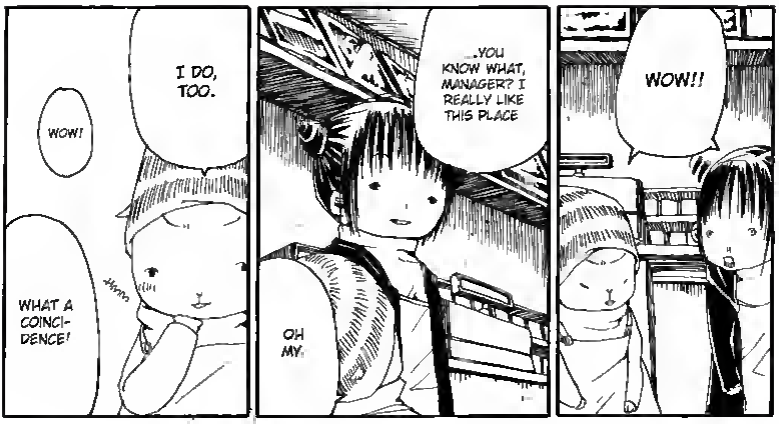
GOTTEN STRONGER?


Epilogue
.....


GOTTEN WEAK.
I'VE...
IT'S JUST BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE.
tear
HELLO—
Swoosh

THE CARRIERS LED ME HERE.
WHY...
W...WWW WWW....
I'M SLEEPING, SO I TRIED DROPPING BY.
THEY'LL TAKE ME BACK, TOO—
THANK YOU.
YOU..
.....
I CAN'T PROMISE TO COME EVERY DAY,
BUT I'LL COME BACK ONCE IN A WHILE.

!!
Hello-
I WONDER WHAT THAT WAS.
HUH?
Huh?
He's practicing how to cry!
I heard he's getting ready to be someone else's kid.
WAAA
chatter
I heard...
chatter
that guy's busy in preparation

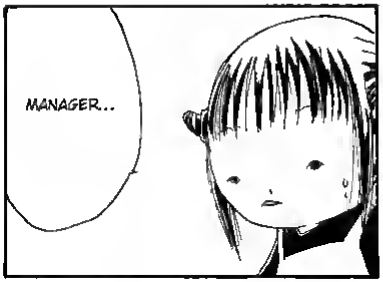


HAPPINESS AND SADNESS INCLUDED, I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS STORE.

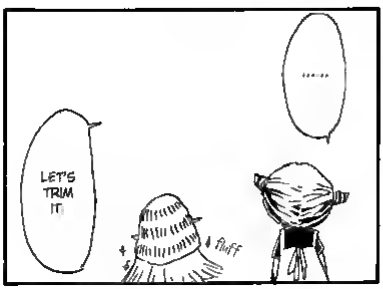
No wonder it's so hard to leave this place

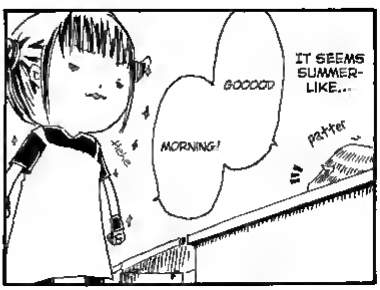
THE END

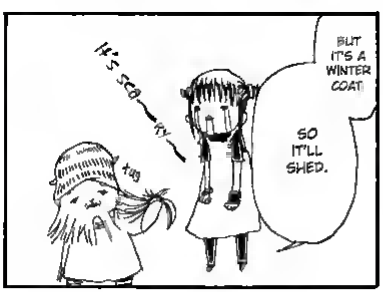
She's coming of age

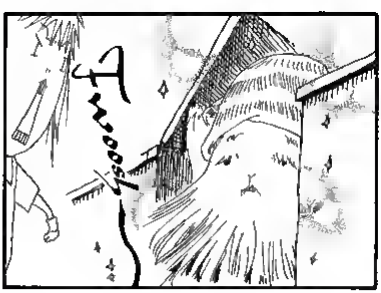

MANAGER...

I GUESS I'LL WEAR A T-SHIRT ...
THERE ARE NO SEASONS, BUT. .
stre - tch


.....
LET'S TRIM IT.
fluff

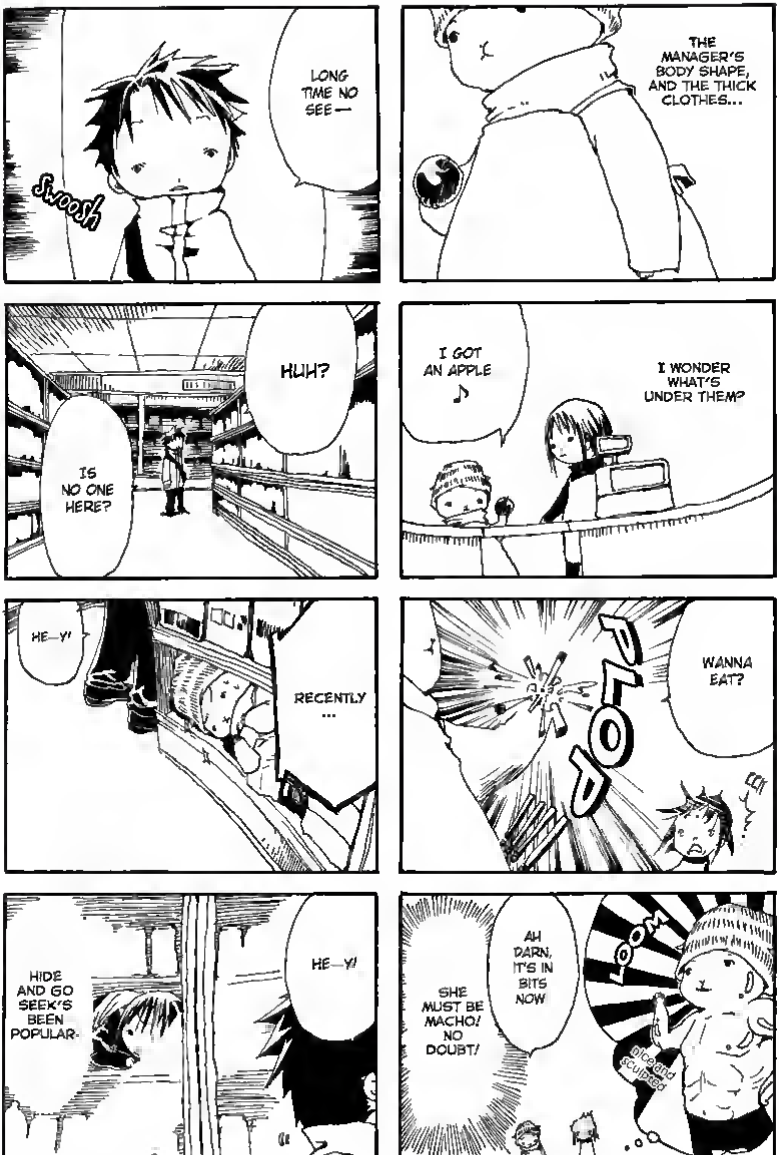

GOOOOD MORNING!
IT SEEMS SUMMER-LIKE...
patter


It's scaaaaary~
BUT IT'S A WINTER COAT.
SO IT'LL SHED.


Swoosh

From your hair?
WE CAN MAKE HAIR ACCESSO-RIES!
for you

That's freaky, manager !!
I'M CHANGING INTO MY WINTER COAT...


SWOOSH
LONG TIME NO SEE—
THE MANAGER'S BODY SHAPE, AND THE THICK CLOTHES...
HUH?
IS NO ONE HERE?
I GOT AN APPLE ♪
I WONDER WHAT'S UNDER THEM?
HE—Y!
RECENTLY ...
PLOP
WANNA EAT?
HIDE AND GO SEEK'S BEEN POPULAR.
HE—Y!
SHE MUST BE MACHO! NO DOUBT!
AH DARN, IT'S IN BITS NOW
LOOM
Bicep and Scuttle

Manager bomb

AH, WELCOME
IS IT... SOFT?
Boing Boing
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
She got revenge.
Pinch
Ah, carnage
Stink
Jump
NOW!
MANAGER!?
THIS SMELL THAT TINGLES MY NOSE
WAS A FART!?
Flaff
poof
poof
Huh?

I THINK I LOST WEIGHT
HUH?!
MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH
, YOU DON'T LOOK VERY DIFFERENT
MY CLOTHES MAKE ME LOOK FATTER—
MANAGER ,YOU'VE BEEN EATING QUITE A BIT
SEE?
Squeeze
YOU HAVE SUCH SOFT CHEEKS
NO! I GOT SKINNIER!
PUSH
How rude!
IF I DON'T KEEP ON EATING, I'LL GET SKINNIER
THAT'S A LIE!!

!
THE MANAGER'S HANDS ARE SPECIAL TO HER.
See, they're not sheep hands.
AH, WELCOME.
I have something on my mind.
ONLY THE MANAGER HAS THESE HANDS.
They're unique.
Fluff
HOW SWEET.
No
I was surprised when I heard you were a dog.
WHAT IS IT?
YOU LOST SOMETHING?
BECAUSE IN REALITY,
CATS AND DOGS ARE SEPARATED INTO FOUR.
One more finger around here.
SHOCKED
I thought you were a sheep or a ram.
JUST GO HOME ALREADY!!
SO YOU'RE SOME UNKNOWN CREATURE.
HUMPH
Bazzah
Bazzah
WOULDN'T IT BE SCARY IF I WERE LIKE THAT!?
That's true
And see, my hands aren't gloves!

NO, I'M NOT—
SQUEEZE
MANAGER, YOU'RE GROWING YOUR WINTER COAT AGAIN!?
OH, GO AHEAD
I WANNA WEAR YOUR HAT SOMETIME, TOO.
WINTER COAT?
Excited
HOLD ON, ALRIGHT?
OKAY!
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG
Tug
SHE FELL FOR IT.
THE MANAGER'S BECOMING A MALE!?
Eek
Flurp

END

Afterword

It's been four years since I started this. I'm glad I got to put all of my ideals into the manager.
Thank you very much to those who've supported me, namely Hino-san, Nawada-san, and Yamagishi-san.
And from the manager to the person reading this right now:

Oh my, thank you—